THIS BOOK
MUST NOT BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LIBRARY

REFERENCE ONLY

PARL. PAPERS
FOR REFERENCE ONLY.

University of London
GURNEY
WOODSTOCK ST.W.

Presented by
the Worshipful Company
of Goldsmiths,
1903.

617064

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/parliamentary-debates_march-30-may-6-1897_48

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

AUTHORISED EDITION.

FOURTH SERIES,

COMMENCING WITH THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

---

60 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME XLVIII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE THIRTIETH DAY OF MARCH
TO
THE SIXTH DAY OF MAY
1897.

WATERLOW & SONS LIMITED,
Contractors to Her Majesty's Government,
25, 26, & 27, GREAT WINCHESTER STREET, E.C.;
BLOMFIELD HOUSE, LONDON WALL, E.C.;
FINSBURY STATIONERY WORKS, CLIFTON STREET, E.C.
49, PARLIAMENT STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.;
TEMPLE ROW, BIRMINGHAM.

PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS OF
"THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES," AUTHORISED EDITION
(UNDER CONTRACT WITH H. M. GOVERNMENT).

89127

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME XLVIII.

FOURTH SERIES.

Page

LORDS: TUESDAY, 30TH MARCH 1897.

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.]:—Read 3^a, passed, and sent to the Commons ... 1

Voluntary Schools Bill:—Motion made,

"That this Bill be now Read the Third time."—*(Lord President of the Council)* 1

Earl Spencer 16
Archbishop of Canterbury 24
Duke of Argyll 32
Lord Herschell 38
Bishop of Manchester ... 46
Marquess of Ripon ... 51
Lord Chancellor 58
Earl Stanhope 61
Lord Norton 63
Lord Herries 65
Bishop of London 67
Earl of Kimberley 72
Lord Privy Seal 77

On the question "That the Bill be now Read a Second time," the House divided:—Contents, 109; Not-Contents, 15.—(Division List appended) 80

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 30TH MARCH 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Dublin Corporation Bill:—As amended, considered 82

Amendment proposed, to omit Clause 21 (Franchise)—*(Mr. Carson)* ... 82

Mr. T. M. Healy... ... 84
Mr. Harrington 85
Mr. Jas. Lowther... ... 86
Mr. Serjt. Hemphill ... 86
Mr. Johnston 88
Chief Secretary for Ireland ... 88
Mr. Maurice Healy 89
Mr. Dane 91
Mr. Field 92
Mr. Compton Rickett 92

Motion made, "That the Debate be now adjourned"—*(Mr. J. O'Connor)* 93
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 93]

[*March* 30.] Page

Question put.—The House divided :—Ayes, 178 ; Noes, 152.—(Division List, No. 153).... 94

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill:—After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed 95

NOTICES OF MOTION.

East India (Officers of General List)—*(Mr. Heywood Johnstone)* 95

East India (Officers of General List)—*(Captain Phillpotts)* 95

Habitual Offenders (Scotland)—*(Sir C. Cameron)* 96

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH)—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Secretary of State for India 96
TELEPHONE SERVICE (TUNBRIDGE WELLS)—Question, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 96
POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Questions, Mr. Holland and Mr. Hubbard; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 97
LONDON WATER SUPPLY (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Questions, Mr. W. F. D. Smith and Mr. Marks; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 97
KINGSTOWN HARBOUR (BOAT ACCIDENTS)—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 99
COUNTY COURT PROCEDURE (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 100
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (HOUSEHOLD TROOPS)—Question, Mr. Flower; Answer, Under Secretary for War 101
BELFAST LUNATIC ASYLUM (DEATH OF INMATE)—Question, Mr. Murnaghan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 102
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. McCartan, Mr. Tully, and Mr. Knox; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 103
CIVIL SERVICE (SECOND DIVISION CLERKS)—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 104
PRISONS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, Lord Advocate ... 105
COUNTY CAVAN MILITIA—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Under Secretary for War 106
POOR LAW UNION (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 106
PRISON VANS (COUNTIES)—Question, Mr. Hutton; Answer, Home Secretary 106
GUN LICENCE (BALLYBUNION, CO. KERRY)—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 107
CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD—Question, Mr. Stuart; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 108
SEAL LIFE (NORTH PACIFIC)—Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 109
CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 109

Crete—Questions, Mr. Dillon, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Captain Pirie, and Mr. Carson; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 109
Post Office Servants (Superannuation)—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 113
Parcel Traffic (England and America)—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 114
Volunteer Camps (Aldershot)—Question, Colonel Dalbiac; Answer, Under Secretary for War 114
Allotments Acts—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 115
Land Law Ireland Act 1896 (Rules)—Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland 115
Army Deserters—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, Under Secretary for War 116
Queen's Diamond Jubilee (Commemoration Medal)—Question, Mr. Hermon Hodge; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 116
Estate Duty (late Emperor of Russia)—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 117
House of Commons (Members and Private Secretaries)—Question, Mr. Cayzer; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 117
Irish Mail Service—Questions, Mr. Dane; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 118
Money Orders—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 118
Telephone Service (England and Isle of Man)—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 118
Portumna Railway—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 119
Judiciary (Ireland)—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 119
London County Council (Water Supply)—Question, Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, President of the Local Government Board... ... 120
Tullamore Gaol—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 120
Arrests for Drunkenness (Omagh)—Questions, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland [Mr. Speaker] 121
Insurance of Poor Persons—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Attorney General 122
Foreign Affairs (Questions)—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir C. Dilke, and Mr. MacNeill; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 122
Business of the House—Questions, Mr. J. Morley and Mr. Buchanan; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury— 123

Financial Relations (Great Britain and Ireland):—

Motion made—

"That the Order for resuming the adjourned Debate on Financial relations (England and Ireland) have precedence this day and to-morrow of the Notices of Motions and of the other Orders of the day."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* 124

Sir C. Dilke 124
Mr. E. Robertson... ... 125
Mr. James Lowther ... 126
First Lord of the Treasury ... 126
Mr. Gibson Bowles 127

Motion agreed to 128

[*March* 30.] Page

MOTIONS.

Canals Protection (London) Bill:—To provide for the protection of Dangerous Places on Canals in the County of London; Presented and Read the First time.—(181) 128

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill:—To amend the Law relating to Salmon Fisheries in Ireland; Presented and Read the First time.—(182) 128

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [29th March]—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Report and proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland establish the existence of an undue burden of taxation on Ireland, which constitutes a great grievance to all classes of the Irish community, and makes it the duty of the Government to propose at an early day remedial legislation."—*(Mr. Blake.)*

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "House," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words,

"so long as the Exchequers of Great Britain and Ireland remain consolidated, all portions of the United Kingdom must be regarded as forming one country for fiscal purposes, and, if any genuine and tangible grievance does exist, it can only be satisfactorily removed by so adjusting the present fiscal system as to render it just and equitable to all persons in whatever part of the United Kingdom they may reside."—*(Mr. Whittaker)*

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." Debate resumed 129

Sir E. Clarke ... ... 129 *Mr. Bigham* 161
Sir T. Sutherland ... 144 *Mr. Clancy* 166
Major Jameson ... ... 150 *Colonel Saunderson* 171
Mr. H. Plunkett ... ... 157 *Mr. Arnold-Forster* 177

Debate adjourned 181

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—As amended, considered; read the Third time, and passed... 181

Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred... 181

Industries (Ireland) Bill:—After short Debate, read a Second time, and committed to a Select Committee 182

County Government (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 182

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 182

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 182

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE:—On the Motion, "That this House do now adjourn."—*(Mr. Vesey Knox)* 182

Mr. T. M. Healy ... 183 *Mr. Lough* 184
First Lord of the Treasury 183

Page

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 31ST MARCH 1897.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND):—Order Read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [29th March] –

Mr. Arnold-Forster ... 185 *First Lord of the Admiralty* ... 227
Mr. Lough ... ... 187 *Mr. J. B. Balfour* 233
Mr. Lecky ... ... 197 *Mr. T. P. O'Connor* 234
Mr. J. Morley 211

Motion made, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Knox*) ... 240
First Lord of the Treasury 241 [*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 242]
Mr. T. M. Healy ... 241 *Mr. Wolff* 242

Question put.—The House divided:—Ayes, 157; Noes, 317.—(Division List—No. 154—appended) 242

Question put, "That those words be there added" 245

Objection taken; Debate accordingly adjourned 245

Working Men's Dwellings Bill:—Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 21st April, read, and discharged—Bill withdrawn 245

Election Petition Bill:—Second Reading deferred 246

Members of Parliament (Vacation of Seats) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 246

Rating (Places of Worship and Schools) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 247

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Accountants (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Prison Made Goods (Importation) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 247

Accountants Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Coal Mines Regulation Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Justices of the Peace Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 247

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Land Tenure Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Parish Registers Bill:—Second Reading deferred 247

Registration of Firms Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Aliens Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Tithe Redemption Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Solicitors' (Magistracy) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Estates Tail Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Page

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 248

Land Law (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 248

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 248

Highways Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 248

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act (1896) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 248

LORDS: THURSDAY, 1st APRIL 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway Bristol (Lines) Bill [H.L.]:—

Motion made,—

"That this Bill be now Read the Third time"—*(Secretary for Scotland)* ... 249

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and to add at the end of the Question the words "this day six months"—*(Viscount Halifax)* 251
Earl of Camperdown ... 254 *Earl of Morley* 255

On the Question whether the word "now" shall stand part of the Motion, resolved in the affirmative; Bill Read 3^{a} accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons 257

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Brought from the Commons; Read 1^{a}—*(The Marquess of Lansdowne)*—[No. 40] 257

LAND COMMISSION (RULES):—Question, The Duke of Abercorn; Answer, Earl of Ranfurly 257

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 1st APRIL 1887.

Town Holdings (Tenants Compensation) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 258

Verminous Persons Bill:—Second Reading deferred 258

Working Men's Dwellings Bill:—Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 21st April, Read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 258

[April 1.]

Page

QUESTIONS.

TELEGRAPH ADDRESSES (BARROW-IN-FURNESS)—Question, Mr. Cayzer; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 258
POST OFFICE TELEPHONE EXCHANGE—Questions, Mr. Begg; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 260
NORTH MUNDHAM BOARD SCHOOLS (SUSSEX)—Question, Mr. Carvell-Williams; Answer, Vice President of the Council 260
ORMATHWAITE ESTATE (LISTOWEL)—Questions, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 261
URBAN ROADS AND FOOTPATHS—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 261
ATTORNEYS (RHODESIA)—Question, Mr. Hedderwick; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 262
GAS POISONING (ALLEGED)—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 262
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (INDIAN TROOPS)—Question, Mr. Bhownaggree; Answer, Secretary of State for India 262
ANTI-PLAGUE INOCULATION (INDIA)—Question, Sir C. Cameron; Answer, Secretary of State for India 263
WEIGHING CATTLE—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 264
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (PAUPERS)—Question, Mr. Holburn; Answer, Lord Advocate 265
MILITARY TRAINING CAMP (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Ferguson; Answer, Under Secretary for War 265
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. McGhee, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. McCartan, Mr. Ffrench, and Mr. Maurice Healy; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland [Mr. Speaker] 266
LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Shee; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland and Chancellor of the Exchequer 269
TECHNICAL EDUCATION—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, Vice President of the Council 270
LOCAL LOANS STOCK—Questions, Mr. Shee; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 270
LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS—Questions, Mr. Shee and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 271
MITCHELSTOWN UNION (ELECTION OF GUARDIANS)—Question, Mr. Wm. Abraham (Cork Co., N.E.); Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland ... 273
BAILIEBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS (CO. CAVAN)—Question, Mr. Young; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 273
PROTESTANT JURORS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Barry; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland... 274
IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell and Mr. Dane; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 274
STAMP DUTY (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Barry and Mr. Maurice Healy; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 277
ARMY REGULATIONS (WEARING THE SHAMROCK)—Questions, Mr. Flavin, Mr. MacNeill, Captain Donelan, Colonel Blundell, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Under Secretary for War [Mr. Speaker] 277
POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Questions, Mr. Patrick O'Brien and Mr. Maurice Healy; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 280
BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY (SIR F. CARRINGTON)—Questions, Mr. Wm. Allan; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 281
SECONDARY EDUCATION—Question, Colonel Lockwood; Answer, Home Secretary 282

[*April* 1.] *Page*

HANTS REGIMENT (FIRST VOLUNTEER BATTALION)—Questions, Mr. Myers; Answer, Under Secretary for War... 283
DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 283
VACCINATION ACTS—Questions, Mr. Logan; Answers, President of the Local Government Board and Home Secretary 283
CRETE—Questions, Captain Pirie, Mr. McKenna, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Dillon, Mr. James Lowther, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. J. Morley, and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 284
MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY—Question, Mr. Mount; Answer, Home Secretary 289
AGRICULTURAL RATING ACT—Questions, Mr. Quilter; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 289
CRIMEAN VETERAN (JOHN BRENNAN) — Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 290
ESLIN RIVER DRAINAGE SCHEME—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 291
ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE (WEXFORD)—Question, Mr. Ffrench; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 291
LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (RETURN OF ESTATES)—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 291
LIGHT DUES ON SHIPPING—Questions, Mr. Herbert Lewis and Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 292
RURAL AUXILIARY POSTMEN—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 293
IRISH ACCOUNT (SAVINGS)—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy and Mr. Clancy; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 294
HIGH SHERIFF (CARRICKFERGUS) — Question, Mr. Kilbride; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 294
HORSE BREEDING (IRELAND)—Question, General Hugh McCalmont; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 294
PRISON WARDERS—Question, Mr. Luttrell; Answer, Home Secretary ... 296
EDUCATION IN WALES (MORTMAIN ACTS)—Question, Mr. H. Lewis; Answer, Attorney General 296
CARBIDE OF CALCIUM—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Attorney General 296
RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 297
PRIME MINISTER (ABSENCE ABROAD)—Questions, Mr. MacNeill; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury... 298
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EASTER HOLIDAYS)—Questions, Mr. J. Ellis, Mr. Morley, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Clancy, and Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 299
FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 300

PRIME MINISTER (ABSENCE ABROAD)—Motion for Adjournment. Mr. Swift MacNeill obtained leave to move the Adjournment of the House in order to call attention to an urgent matter of definite public importance —namely, the absence from the United Kingdom of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and his consequent inability to have personal communication with his colleagues in the Cabinet and to communicate intelligence to Parliament personally in the critical condition of the Eastern question, and as to the relations of this country with the Foreign Powers 301
Motion made, and Question "That this House do now adjourn," put and negatived 303

MOTION.

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill:—To remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to officers on his establishment; Presented and Read the First time.—(182) 303

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Read the Third time, and passed 303

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [5th February], "That the Bill be now Read a Second time." Amendment —*(Mr. Caldwell)* negatived. On the Question, "That the Bill be Read a Second time."

Mr. Bryce 304
Mr. Parker Smith ... 304
Lord Advocate 304
Mr. J. B. Balfour 308
Sir C. Cameron 310
[*Mr. Speaker*] ... ... 307, 310]

Bill Read a Second time 310

Motion made, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc."—(*Lord Advocate*) 310

Amendment proposed to leave out the words, "the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.," in order to add instead thereof the words—

"a Committee consisting of all the Members representing Scottish constituencies, together with Fifteen other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection."—*(Dr. Farquharson)* 310

Mr. Crombie 312
Lord Advocate 313
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 313]
Mr. Caldwell 314
Sir W. Priestley ... 315
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 316
Mr. Halsey 318
Mr. Birrell 319
Mr. Webster 320
Mr. Buchanan 321
Mr. Parker Smith 321
Sir R. Reid 323
Mr. Renshaw 323
Mr. Holburn 324
Mr. Courtney 324

Question put, "That the words 'the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.' stand part of the Question." The House divided:—Ayes, 193; Noes, 95.—(Division List, No. 155) 327

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc. 327

Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill:—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(First Commissioner of Works)* 327

Mr. Lough 327
Mr. Lewis 327
Mr. P. O'Brien 328
Mr. Daly 328
Mr. Burns 329
Mr. Glancy 330
Mr. Allan 331
Mr. J. P. Farrell 332
First Commissioner of Works ... 333
Mr. Caldwell 333
Mr. Flavin 334
[*Mr. Speaker* ... 328, 332, 334

[*April* 1.] *Page*

Question put, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time." The House divided :—Ayes, 158 ; Noes, 23.—(Division List, No. 156) ... 334

Motion made, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, three to be nominated by the House and two by the Committee of Selection."—*(First Commissioner of Works)*... ... 334

After short Debate, Motion agreed to 335

Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill :—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Secretary to the Treasury)* 335

Mr. Clancy ... ... 336 *Mr. M. Healy*... 341
Mr. T. M. Healy... ... 336 *Mr. J. P. Farrell* 342
[*Mr. Speaker* 336, 337, 343, 345] *Mr. Daly* 343
Mr. Bartley ... ... 341 *Mr. P. O'Brien* 345

The House divided :—Ayes, 60 ; Noes, 160.—(Division List, No. 157)... 345

Motion made, "That the Question be now put."—*(Chancellor of the Exchequer)* 346

Question put, "That the Question be now put." The House divided :—Ayes, 164 ; Noes, 67.—(Division List, No. 158) 346

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." The House divided :—Ayes, 165 ; Noes, 68.—(Division List, No. 159) 346

Secretary to the Treasury claimed to move, "That the Main Question be now put." 346

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."—The House divided :—Ayes, 171 ; Noes, 67.—(Division List, No. 160). Bill read a Second time 346

Motion made—

"That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection; that all petitions against the Bill presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their counsel, or agents, be heard against the Bill, and counsel heard in support of the Bill; that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records ; that three be the quorum."—*(Secretary to the Treasury)* 346

Amendment proposed to omit the word "Select" in order to insert the word "Standing."—*(Mr. T. M. Healy)* 347
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 347] *Mr. T. M. Healy* 347

Mr. Duncombe claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question. Debate resumed 348

Major Jameson ... ... 349 *Mr. Clancy* 350
Secretary to the Treasury 349 *Mr. M. Healy* 350

Motion made—

"That the Debate be now adjourned."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* ... 351

Mr. T. M. Healy ... 352 [*Mr. Speaker* ... 349, 350, 352]
Colonel Lockwood ... 352

Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," put and agreed to ... 353

Motion made—

"That the Order be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* 353

[*April* 1.]

Page

Trusts (Scotland) Bill :—Read the Third time, and passed 353

Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill :—After short Debate, read a Second time, and committed for Monday 3rd May 354

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Second Reading deferred till Monday next 354

Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 354

Dangerous Performances Bill :—Second Reading deferred 354

Patent Office Extension Bill :—Second Reading deferred 354

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... ... 354

Foreign Prison-Made Goods Bill :—Second Reading deferred 354

Berriew School Bill :—Second Reading deferred 354

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 354

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill :—Second Reading deferred 354

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill :—Second Reading deferred 355

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 355

County Councils (Qualification of Women) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 355

Truck Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 355

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 355

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 355

County Government (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 355

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 355

Justices of the Peace Bill :—Second Reading deferred 356

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 356

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 356

Land Law (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 356

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 356

MOTIONS.

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill :—To amend the Navy and Marines (Wills) Act 1865, presented, and Read the First time.—(183) ... 356

Chaff-Cutting Machines Accidents Bill :—For the prevention of Accidents by Chaff-cutting Machines, presented, and Read the First time.—(184) 356

Page

LORDS : FRIDAY, 2ND APRIL 1897.

Military Works (Money) Bill :—Brought from the Commons and Read 1ª—[No. 43] 357

Trusts (Scotland) Bill :—Brought from the Commons and Read 1ª.—[No. 44] ... 357

ESTATE DUTY (PICTURES AND WORKS OF ART, ETC.)—*(Earl Stanhope)* ... 357
Lord Arundell ... ... 358 *Earl Stanhope*... 360
Lord Privy Seal 359

Voluntary Schools Bill :—Considered in Committee 360
Clause 1,—(Aid Grant to Voluntary Elementary Schools)... 360
After Debate, Amendments on Paper not moved; Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill 370
Clause 2,—(Repeal of 17s. 6d. Limit in s. 19 of 39 and 40 Vict. c. 79, as respects Day Schools in England and Wales)—Ordered to stand part of the Bill 370
Clause 3,—(Exemption from Rates of Voluntary Elementary Schools)—Ordered to stand part of the Bill 371
Amendment proposed, to insert following new clause after Clause 3 :—
"The Education Department shall in every year cause to be laid before both Houses of Parliament a report of the proceedings under this Act during the preceding year."—*(Earl of Kimberley)* 371
After short Debate, Committee divided on the Amendment :—Contents, 19; Not-Contents, 65.—(Division List appended) 373
Clause 4,—(Definitions)—Ordered to stand part of the Bill 374
Clause 5,—(Extent of Act and Short Title)... 374
After short Debate, Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill; Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next 378

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill :—After short Debate, Read 2ª; and committed 379

LAND COMMISSION—*(Viscount Templetown)* 379
Earl of Ranfurly 383

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE :—Statement by Lord President of the Council ... 383

COMMONS : FRIDAY, 2ND APRIL 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Dublin Corporation Bill :—Read the Third time, and passed 384

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (INCREASED GRANT) :—Committee on Monday next.—*(Sir John Gorst)* 384

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE (ADVANCES) :—Committee upon Monday next.—*(Mr. Hanbury)* 384

ARMY (DISEASE) :—Address for Return.—*(Major Rasch)* 384

[*April 2.*] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

Post Office Establishments—Questions, Mr. Daly, Mr. Macaleese, and Mr. McCartan; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 385

Royal Irish Constabulary—Questions, Mr. Macaleese, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir T. Esmonde, and Mr. Tully; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland and Chancellor of the Exchequer 385

Daunt's Rock Lightship—Questions, Mr. Field and Captain Donelan; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 388

Land Commission—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. Shee, Mr. McCartan, Captain Donelan, Dr. Fox, and Mr. Murnaghan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland and Secretary to the Treasury ... 389

Clerkship of Petty Sessions (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Young; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 393

Sunday Postal Delivery (Co. Cavan)—Question, Mr. Young; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 394

Telegraphic Errors—Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton and Sir J. Fergusson; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 394

Irish Teachers' Residence Act—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 395

Workmistresses (Irish National Schools)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 395

Coolgreaney Estate (Ireland)—Question, Sir T. Esmonde; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 396

Revenue Returns (Ireland)—Question, Sir T. Esmonde; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 396

Distress (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 397

Post Office Servant (Dismissal)—Question, Viscount Valentia; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 397

Labourers' Acts (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 398

Lunatic Asylums (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 399

Troops in India (Supply of Beer)—Question, Mr. Renshaw; Answer, Secretary of State for India 399

Education (Ireland)—Questions, Mr. Field, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Mandeville; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 400

Statute Law Revision Bills (Ireland)—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 401

Channel Fleet—Question, Mr. Hedderwick; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 401

Recruits (3rd Battalion Highland Light Infantry and Scottish Rifles)—Questions, Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); Answers, Under Secretary for War 401

Military Camp (Scotland)—Questions, Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk) and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Under Secretary for War 402

Strabane (Crown Sessions)—Question, Mr. Hemphill; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 403

Dublin Electric Tramways—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 403

Parcel Post (Great Britain and Brazil)—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 404

Crete—Questions, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. H. Lewis, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. MacNeill, and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 404

[*April* 2.]

Page

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR AND PEMBA—Question, Mr. Thomas Bayley; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 406
MILITARY HOSPITAL, FELIXSTOWE—Questions, Mr. Goddard; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 407
DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS—Questions, Mr. Daly; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 407
POST OFFICE ANSWERS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 408
KINGSTOWN TOWN COMMISSIONERS—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy and Mr. Clancy; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 408
CARBIDE OF CALCIUM—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Attorney General 409
FOREIGN OFFICE—Question, Mr. MacNeill; Answer, Attorney General ... 409
WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS—Questions, Mr. Flannery and Sir H. Vincent; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 410
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (BANK HOLIDAY)—Questions, Mr. Goschen and Mr. MacNeill; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 410
NAVAL EXPENDITURE—Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. J. Redmond, and Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 411
PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE BILL—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 412
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. Dillon, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 412

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY:—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" 414

VOTES AND GRANTS FOR LOCAL PURPOSES:—Amendment proposed to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words—

"a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the amount and proportion of moneys expended out of the moneys provided by Parliament for local purposes in each division of the United Kingdom, and how far the financial relations by the sums so contributed are equitable to Scotland." (*Dr. Clark*) 414

[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 414]
Sir J. Leng 418
Chancellor of the Exchequer ... 420
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman ... 424

Amendment negatived 425

AFRICA (EUROPEAN POWERS):—(*Sir C. Dilke*) 425

Under Secretary, Foreign Affairs 434
Mr. Buxton 439
Sir G. Baden-Powell ... 441
Mr. Dillon 444
Mr. McKenna 447
Mr. Burns 447
Mr. Bayley 449

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD:—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*) 450

Secretary Local Government Board 451

COUNTY COUNCILLORS' TRAVELLING EXPENSES (SCOTLAND):—(*Mr. Weir*) —Question ruled out of order 453

FELON CONVICTS:—(*Mr. Pickersgill*) 454

Under Secretary, Home Department 456
Sir W. Lawson 457

Page

TELEPHONE SERVICE :—*(Mr. Bartley)* 458

Sir J. Fergusson... ... 460 *Secretary to the Treasury* ... 463
Mr. E. Lawrence ... 463

CRETE :—*(Mr. Labouchere)* 466

First Lord of the Treasury 470 *Mr. Gibson Bowles* 474
Mr. Dalziel 473

DISTRESS (MAYO) :—*(Mr. Crilly)* 476

Chief Secretary for Ireland 478 *Mr. J. P. Farrell* 482
Mr. T. M. Healy ... 480

First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move "That the Question be now put" 483

Question put, "That the Question be now put." The House divided :—Ayes, 155 ; Noes, 37.—(Division List, No. 161) 483

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to 483

Supply considered in Committee—(Civil Service and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1897–8) 483

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next 483

WAYS AND MEANS :—Committee deferred 483

Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill :—Read a Second time, and Committed ... 483

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 483

Registration of Parliamentary Voters Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 484

Licences (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Sale of Food and Drugs Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Sale of Distress Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Cemeteries Rating Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Shop Assistants (Half Holiday) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Trout Fishing Close Time (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

County Government (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 484

LORDS : MONDAY, 5TH APRIL 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Dublin Corporation Bill :—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª 485

Allotments (London) Bill [H.L.] :—To facilitate the provision of allotments by the London County Council ; Presented by the Earl of Carrington, and Read 1ª.—[No. 45] 485

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE :—Questions, Earl Stanhope and Earl of Feversham ; Answers, Lord Privy Seal... 485

[*April* 5.] *Page*

Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill:—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Viscount Knutsford)* ... 486
Lord Chancellor 488
Read 2ª, and committed 488

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Secretary of State for War)* 488
Earl Spencer 496
Read 2ª. Committee negatived 496

Voluntary Schools Bill:—Read 3ª, and passed 496

Military Lands Acts (1892) Amendment Bill:—Considered in Committee; reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived 496

COMMONS: MONDAY, 5TH APRIL 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill:—As amended, Considered.
Clause 49,—(Pension Fund) 498
Amendment proposed, to add at the end of the clause the following sub-section :—
(8) Sections 27 and 76 of the Friendly Societies Act 1896, and so much of Section 28 of the same Act, as relates to the sending reports and abstracts of valuations to the Registrar shall apply to the Fund as if it were a Registered Friendly Society.—*(Sir C. Dilke)* 502
Mr. Galloway 505
Amendment agreed to 505

QUESTIONS.

ENGINEER VOLUNTEERS (SMALL-ARM AMMUNITION)—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Under Secretary for War 505
TROOPS QUARTERED AT CANTERBURY—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Under Secretary for War 506
CHELSEA HOSPITAL—Questions, Colonel Lockwood and Captain Donelan; Answers, Under Secretary for War and Financial Secretary to the War Office... 506
OUTDOOR RELIEF (WESTPORT AND CASTLEBAR UNIONS)—Question, Dr. Ambrose; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 507
GAMBLING IN OPTIONS AND FUTURES—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 508
ARMY RECRUITING—Question, Colonel Wyndham Murray; Answer, Under Secretary for War 508
AUXILIARY SORTING CLERKS (LIMERICK)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 509
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. Flynn, Mr. McCartan, and Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 509

[*April* 5.] *Page*

Drogheda (County Court and Quarter Sessions)—Question, Mr. McGhee; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 511
Niger Campaign (Hausa Troops)—Question, Mr. Thornton; Answer, Under Secretary for War 511
Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railway (Overcrowding)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 512
North Sea Fisheries Convention—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 512
Channel Fleet—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, First Lord of the Admiralty 512
School Board Elections (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate... 513
Parish Councils (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 513
Crete—Questions, Mr. Dillon, Sir J. Leng, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. M. Healy, Mr. Herbert Lewis, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 513
Ministerial Policy—Questions, Sir Wm. Harcourt; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 516
Parochial Records (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland... 520
Militia Officers—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 521
Brigade of Guards—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 521
Cavalry Horses—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 522
Deportation of Paupers—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Lord Advocate... 522
Volunteer Artillery Position Batteries (Scotland)—Question, Sir C. Cameron; Answer, Under Secretary for War 522
Naval Expenditure—Questions, Captain Donelan; Answers, First Lord of the Admiralty 523
Grocers' Licences—Questions, Colonel Waring and Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 523
Irish Mail Service—Questions, Mr. M. Austin and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 524
Venezuela—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 525
Land Law (Ireland) Acts—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 525
Houses of Parliament (Terrace)—Question, Sir H. Fowler; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 525
Sample Post—Question, Mr. H. O. Arnold-Forster; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 526
Monaghan Grand Jury (Road Repairs)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 527
Monaghan Union Workhouse—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 527
Howth Harbour—Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 528
Tithe Rent Charge (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 528
Army Regulations (Wearing the Shamrock)—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Under Secretary for War [Mr. Speaker] 529
Post Office Establishments—Questions, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh and Mr. McCartan; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 530

[*April* 5.] *Page*

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 531
BALLINROBE AND LOUGH MASK CANAL—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 532
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 533
NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSIONS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 533
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 533
DISTRESS (LISTOWEL UNION)—Questions, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 534
POOR LAW AMALGAMATION BILL (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. McCartan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 535
VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL—Question, Mr. H. Roberts; Answer, Vice President of the Council 535
LOANS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 536
ADMIRALTY COOPER (BULL POINT, DEVONPORT)—Question, Mr. Luttrell; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty 536
HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (WITNESS CASES)—Question, Mr. Allison; Answer, Attorney General... 537
FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 538
ELECTION PETITIONS—Questions, Mr. Bartley and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury... 538

Grocers' Certificates (Scotland) Abolition Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 538

MOTION.

Volunteers Bill:—To declare the effect of the provisions of the Volunteer Act 1863, with respect to Rules for Volunteer Corps; Presented, and Read the First time—[No. 187.] 539

Industries (Ireland) Bill:—Select Committee on the Industries (Ireland) Bill nominated 539
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill:—Select Committee on the Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill nominated 539

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (INCREASED GRANT):—Considered in Committee—

Motion made—

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament of an addition to the grant payable to School Boards under Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act 1870, by increasing the sum of 7s. 6d. therein mentioned by 4d. for every complete penny by which the rate therein mentioned exceeds 3d., provided that the said sum as so increased shall not exceed 16s. 6d."—*(Vice President of the Council)* 539

Motion agreed to; to be reported upon Thursday 583

[April 5.] *Page*

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill:—Second Reading deferred... ... 583

Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill:—Read a Second time; and committed for Thursday 584

Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill:—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Read the Third time, and passed 584

Dangerous Performances Bill:—Second Reading deferred 584

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill:—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Lord Advocate)* 584

After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed 587

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill:—Read a Second time, and committed 588

Berriew School Bill:—Second Reading deferred 588

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 588

Foreign Prison Made Goods Bill:—Second Reading deferred 588

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned 588

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill:—Second Reading deferred 588

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill:—Read a Second time, and committed 588

Patent Office Extension Bill:—Read a Second time; and, after a short Debate, referred to a Select Committee 590

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE [ADVANCES].—Considered in Committee 591

Motion made,—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding in the whole £500,000, as may be required for the purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of a Site for Public Offices in or near Whitehall, and for other purposes connected therewith, and to authorise the Treasury, for the purpose of providing for the issue and repayment of such sums, to borrow money by means of terminable annuities for a period not exceeding fifty years, such annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund" —*(First Commissioner of Works)* 591

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£500,000," in order to insert instead thereof "£455,000"—*(Mr. J. P. Farrell)* 591

Question put, "That '£500,000' stand part of the Question. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 163; Noes, 12.—(Division List, No. 162). Original Question put, and agreed to 591

SUPPLY.—Committee deferred 592

WAYS AND MEANS.—Committee deferred 592

London Water Companies Amalgamation Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 592

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 592

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill:—

Motion made,—

"That the Bill be now Read a Second time"—*(Mr. Tomlinson)* 592

House counted out at Half after Ten of the Clock till To-morrow ... 592

Page

LORDS: TUESDAY, 6TH APRIL 1897.

EARL OF KINGSTON:—Report from the Lord Chancellor 593

Quarter Sessions Jurors' (Ireland) Bill:—Brought from the Commons and Read 1a.—[No. 47] 593

Conveyancing Bill [H.L.]:—To simplify the title to and transfer of land, presented by the Lord Davey and Read 1a—[No. 46] 593

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Read 3a, and passed 593

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Read 3a, and passed 593

IRISH MAIL SERVICE:—Question, Earl of Erne; Answer, Postmaster General 593

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE:—Question, Viscount Galway; Answer, Secretary of State for War 595

Voluntary Schools Bill:—Statement by Lord Chancellor 595

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 6TH APRIL 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—*(Major Rasch)* 595

CROWN LANDS (WALES)—*(Mr. Brynmor Jones)* 596

QUESTIONS.

ALBANY AND KING GEORGE'S SOUND GARRISON—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secretary for War 596

BREWING MATERIALS—Question, Mr. Brookfield; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 596

HAMPSTEAD UNION WORKHOUSE—Question, Mr. Talbot; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 597

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Questions, General Sir H. Havelock-Allan and General Laurie; Answers, Under Secretary for War and First Commissioner of Works 597

IMPERIAL REVENUE—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 598

FATAL ACCIDENTS INQUIRY (SCOTLAND) ACT—Question, Sir J. Leng; Answer, Lord Advocate 599

LIGHTHOUSES AND FOGHORNS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Sir J. Leng; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 599

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer 600

NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION—Questions, Mr. Weir and Mr. Buchanan; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 602

[April 6.] *Page*

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT (ELECTRIC LIGHTING)—Question, Mr. Weir ; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 603
ALDERSHOT MANŒUVRES (ROYAL MARINES)—Question, Mr. Kearley ; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 604
POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Questions, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Macaleese, Mr. McCartan, and Mr. Austin ; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury ... 604
CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Carson ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 606
PAROCHIAL RATES (LIVERPOOL)—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams ; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 607
BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH)—Question, Colonel Wyndham-Murray ; Answer, Under Secretary for War 607
BURIAL GROUND (DEBENHAM, SUFFOLK)—Question, Mr. Stevenson ; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 607
NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland 608
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Captain Donelan, Mr. McCartan, Mr. Hammond, and Mr. J. Dillon ; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland 609
REPLY LETTER CARDS—Question, Captain Norton ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 612
INDIAN FAMINE—Question, Mr. Bhownaggree ; Answer, Secretary of State for India 613
MULLINGAR UNION—Question, Mr. Tully ; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 614
LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY (DEATH OF A FIREMAN)—Question, Mr. Channing ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 615
ASSIZES (CO. DOWN)—Question, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh ; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland... 615
CRETE—Questions, Mr. Dillon, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, and Mr. McLeod ; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Under Secretary for War 616
METROPOLITAN POLICE BOOTS—Questions, Captain Norton ; Answers, Home Secretary [Mr. Speaker] 616
WORKMEN'S TRAINS—Question, Captain Norton ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 618
CAVALRY REGIMENTS—Questions, Mr. Duncombe and Major Rasch ; Answers, Under Secretary for War 619
SWANSEA WORKHOUSE (ROMAN CATHOLIC CHILDREN)—Question, Mr. Flavin ; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 620
TRANSVAAL—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett and Captain Bethell ; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 621
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894)—Question, Sir C. Dilke ; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 623
NIGER CAMPAIGN—Question, General Laurie ; Answer, Under Secretary for War 623
ALLOTMENTS (DEVON)—Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne ; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 624
LONDON WATER SUPPLY (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton ; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 625
EMIGRANTS' INFORMATION OFFICE—Question, Mr. Hogan ; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 625
PRINCE OF WALES'S HOSPITAL FUND—Question, Mr. Henniker-Heaton ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 626
POST OFFICE GUIDE—Question, Mr. Henniker-Heaton ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 627

[*April* 6.] *Page*

LOCAL LOANS FUND (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Dane and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland 627

WATERFORD, DUNGARVAN AND LISMORE RAILWAY—Questions, Mr. J. Redmond, Colonel Waring, Mr. A. O'Connor, Captain Donelan, and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 628

ISLAND OF LEWIS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 630

ICELAND—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Under Secretary for War ... 631

NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOLS BILL—Question, Mr. Acland; Answer, Vice President of the Council 631

ASIA MINOR AND NORTHERN SYRIA—Questions, Mr. Bryce, Mr. H. Lewis, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 632

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 633

LOCAL OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL—Question, Mr. Leuty; Answer, Secretary to the Local Government Board 633

SWAZILAND—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 634

THIRD CLASS RAILWAY TICKETS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Austin; Answer Secretary to the Treasury 634

PARISH MEETING (CAREW, PEMBROKESHIRE)—Question, Mr. Rees-Davies; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 635

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 636

MULLINGAR PETTY SESSIONS—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 636

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY—Question, Mr. Thomas Shaw; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 637

BRITISH MUSEUM—Question, Mr. Sydney Gedge; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 637

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Thorburn; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 638

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION—[EXPENSES]:—Committee upon Thursday.—*(Mr. Hanbury)* 638

Restraint of Evictions (London) Bill:—Second Reading deferred.—*(Lord George Hamilton)* 639

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND [CONTRIBUTION]:—Committee upon Thursday.—*(Lord George Hamilton)* 639

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION:—Committee upon Thursday.—*(Lord George Hamilton)* 639

CRETE (MINISTERIAL POLICY):—*Sir William Harcourt* 639
First Lord of the Treasury 639

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY):—Statement by First Lord of the Treasury 641

County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 641

School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 642

[*April 7.*] *Page*

MOTIONS.

Trawlers' Licensing Bill:—To establish the Licensing and Registration of Trawlers; presented, and Read the First time.—(191) 642

Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment Bill:—To amend the Law relating to the Licensing of Beerhouses and Places for the Sale of Cider and Wine by Retail in England and Wales; presented, and Read First time.—(192) 642

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FOOD SUPPLIES (UNITED KINGDOM):—Motion made—

"That in the opinion of this House, the dependence of the United Kingdom on foreign imports for the necessaries of life, and the consequences that may arise therefrom in the event of war, demands the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government."—*(Mr. Seton-Karr)* 642

Mr. Yerburgh 652
Sir C. Dilke 656
Mr. J. Lowther 661
Mr. Lambert 663
Sir J. Colomb 665
First Lord of the Treasury ... 667

Motion agreed to 676

MONEY-LENDING:—Select Committee appointed to inquire into the alleged evils attending money-lending transactions at high rates of interest, or under oppressive conditions as to repayment, between the poorer classes and professional money lenders, and to report thereon 676

House counted out at Five Minutes before Eight of the Clock till To-morrow 676

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 7TH APRIL 1897.

Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill:—

Motion made—

"That the Bill be now Read a Second Time."—*(Mr. Wingfield-Digby)* ... 677

Mr. Mildmay 680
Mr. Lambert 682
Mr. G. Whiteley... ... 682
Mr. Radcliffe Cooke ... 684
Sir J. Joicey 684
Sir A. Acland-Hood ... 686
Dr. Farquharson ... 687
Sir E. Lees 689
Mr. Kilbride 690
Captain Chaloner 692
Mr. Brigg 694
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney ... 697
Mr. Parker Smith 698
Mr. Hedderwick 699
President, Board of Agriculture 700
Mr. Bryce 705
Sir T. Carmichael 709

Mr. Wingfield Digby claimed to move "That the Question be now put" 710

[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 710]

Question accordingly put, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time." —The House divided:—Ayes, 160; Noes, 91.—(Division List, No. 163).—Bill read a Second time 710

[*April* 7.] *Page*

Motion made, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—*(Mr. Long)* 710

Bill committed to a Select Committee 711

Boards of Guardians and Labourers' (Ireland) Bill :—

Motion made—

"That the Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Mr. Murnaghan)* ... 711

Mr. Dillon ... ... 713 *Mr. Serjeant Hemphill* ... 713

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*(Colonel Waring)* 713

Mr. Dane ... ... 716 *Mr. J. Lowther* 716

Debate adjourned; to be resumed To-morrow 716

Teind Court (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 716

Labour Bureaux Bill :—Second Reading deferred 716

Militia Bill :—Second Reading deferred 716

University Education (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Unlawful Possession Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (29th January) further adjourned 717

Vehicles (Lights) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Building Feus and Leases (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 717

Rating of Machinery Suspensory Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Solicitors (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Appointment of High Sheriffs (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 717

County Secretaries' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Election Petitions Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill :—Second Reading deferred 717

Parish Registers Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

Registration of Firms Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

Tithe Redemption Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

Solicitors (Magistracy) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

SUPPLY :—Committee deferred 718

WAYS AND MEANS :—Committee deferred 718

Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 718

Police Pensions and Service Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

Police Appointment and Promotion Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

Succession (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 718

Mersey Channels Bill :—Committee deferred 718

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 719

Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Canals Protection (London) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Locomotives on Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Access to Mountains (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Registration of Parliamentary Voters Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 719

Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee (24th March) further adjourned 719

Justices of the Peace Bill :—Second Reading deferred 719

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 720

Municipal Franchise (No. 2) (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 720

Land Law (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 720

County Government (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 720

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 720

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 720

MOTION.

Idiots' Institution (Exemption from Rates) Bill :—To exempt from Poor and other Local Rates all Registered Institutions for the care, training, and education of Idiots and Imbeciles; Presented and Read the First time.—(193) 720

LORDS: THURSDAY, 8TH APRIL 1897.

EARL OF KINGSTON (CLAIM TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND) 721

COMMISSION :—The following Bills received the Royal Assent :—
- Crays Gas 721
- Dunbarton County Buildings 721
- Edinburgh American Land Mortgage Company, Limited 721
- Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 1) ... 721
- Military Lands Act 721
- Military Works 721
- South Metropolitan Gas 721
- South Yorkshire Junction Railway 721
- Thompson's Divorce 721
- Voluntary Schools 721

NEW PEER :—Charles George Viscount Cobham and Baron Cobham, introduced 722

SAT FIRST :—Lord Hay *(E. Kinnoul)*, sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 722

[*April* 8.] Page

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills:—Order made 722

Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill:—Considered in Committee, reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee 722

BELMULLET AND ACHILL (STEAM COMMUNICATION):—*(Earl of Arran)* ... 722

Lord Privy Seal 724

LAND COMMISSION:—*(Lord Castletown)* 724

Lord Chancellor 725

House Adjourned to Monday, the 3rd of May next 726

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 8TH APRIL 1897.

COMMISSION:—(For list of Bills passed, see proceedings of House of Lords of this date) 726

London Water Companies Bills:—Notices of Motion 726

Colonel Lockwood ... 727 *Mr. Stuart* 727

QUESTIONS.

MOMBASA RAILWAY—Question, Colonel Williams; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 728

GLEBE OF KINTAIL (FORESHORE)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 728

POLICE (COUNTIES, SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 729

INSPECTOR OF POOR (KILTEARN, ROSS-SHIRE)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 729

TELEGRAPH OFFICES—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 730

HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 731

INCOME TAX (SCOTLAND)—Question, Sir C. Cameron; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 731

INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY—Questions, Mr. Wanklyn, Sir H. Fowler, and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 732

ARREST OF MR. CRANSTOUN—Question, Mr. Willox; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 733

HOLIDAYS (PRISON WARDERS)—Question, Mr. Willox; Answer, Home Secretary 733

RAILWAY ACCIDENT (ROMFORD STATION)—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 734

POST CARDS (MOURNING BORDERS)—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 735

KEW GARDENS—Question, Mr. Yoxall; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 735

ILLEGAL TRAWLING IN SCOTTISH WATERS—Questions, Captain Pirie and Mr. Hedderwick; Answer, Lord Advocate 735

[*April* 8.] *Page*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1896—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 736
WEST AFRICA (LIQUOR TRADE)—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 737
OYSTER CULTURE—Questions, Sir Wm. Priestley; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 737
POSTAL UNION CONVENTION—Question, Mr. J. Lowther; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 738
COUNTY COUNCILS (LOANS FROM OFFICIALS)—Question, Mr. Flower; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 739
PARISH COUNCIL (MARNOCH, BANFFSHIRE)—Question, Sir W. Wedderburn; Answer, Lord Advocate 739
IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Question, Mr. O'Malley; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 740
SHERIFFS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. McCartan, Mr. Carson, and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland... 740
PETTY SESSIONS (BALLYNAHINCH)—Question, Mr. McCartan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 740
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. McCartan, Colonel Waring, Mr. Carson, and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland and Attorney General for Ireland 742
RIFLE RANGE (TYRELLA, CO. DOWN)—Question, Mr. McCartan; Answer, Under Secretary for War 745
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Question, Lord Balcarres; Answer, Under Secretary for War 746
LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND)—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland... 746
NATIONAL SCHOOL (SIX MILE BRIDGE, KILLARNEY)—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland ... 747
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. Dane; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 747
CRETE—Question, Mr. Stevenson; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 749
RAILWAY ACCIDENT (POTTER'S LANE, WEDNESBURY)—Question, Mr. Green; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 749
MASSACRE AT EGHIM—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 750
CAVALRY HORSES—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 750
ENLISTMENT REGULATIONS—Questions, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War [Mr. Speaker] 750
SANITARY MEASURES (INDIA)—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary of State for India 751
WELSH LAND COMMISSION (REPORT)—Question, Mr. H. Roberts; Answer, Home Secretary 752
PRIVILEGE CABS—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Home Secretary... ... 753
NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 753
SAILORS' HOME (CORK)—Questions, Mr. Maurice Healy, Captain Donelan, and Mr. Carson; Answers, Civil Lord of the Admiralty 754
NITRO-GLYCERINE FACTORY (ANGLESEY)—Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, Home Secretary 755
COOPERS (DEPTFORD VICTUALLING YARD)—Question, Mr. Darling; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty 755
WATERFORD, DUNGARVAN, AND LISMORE RAILWAY—Questions, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Carson, Mr. J. Redmond, and Mr. Dunbar Barton; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 756

[*April* 8.] *Page*

GUN LICENCE (CO. ROSCOMMON)—Questions, Mr. J. Dillon; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 757

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE—Questions, Captain Norton and Mr. Bartley; Answers, Under Secretary for War 758

NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOL DISTRICTS—Questions, Sir C. Dilke and Mr. Gray; Answers, Vice President of the Council 759

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS (CHARLEVILLE, CO. CORK)—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 759

POOR SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICTS—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Vice President of the Council 760

EDUCATION RATE—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Vice President of the Council 760

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Berriew School Bill :—

Motion made,—

"That the Bill be now Read a Second time."—(*Vice President of the Council*) ... 761

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Humphreys-Owen*) 762

Mr. Lewis	762	*Mr. J. H. Roberts*	773
Mr. T. M. Healy	763	*Mr. J. H. Johnstone*	775
Mr. Carson	765	*Mr. Lloyd-George*	775
Mr. E. Robertson	766	*Solicitor General*	775
Mr. Brynmor Jones	768	*Sir F. Lockwood*	776
Mr. Gibson Bowles	771	*Attorney General*	777
Mr. Acland	773	[*Mr. Speaker*, 762, 763, 765, 767, 774]	

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." The House divided:—Ayes, 224; Noes, 102.—(Division List, No. 164) 778

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time." The House divided:—Ayes, 219; Noes, 88.—(Division List, No. 165). Bill read a Second time 778

Motion made, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc."—(*Sir J. Gorst*) 779

Amendment proposed, "To leave out the words "Standing Committee on Law, Etc.," and to insert instead thereof the words "a Select Committee."—(*Mr. T. H. Healy*) 779

Mr. Lewis 779

Question, "That the words 'the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.' stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to 780

Main Question put.—The House divided:—Ayes, 210; Noes, 95.—(Division List, No. 166.)—Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc. 780

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill :—

Motion made,

"That this Bill be now Read a Second time.—(*Attorney General*) 780

[*April* 8.] *Page*

Amendment proposed, "to leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—*(Mr. Lloyd Morgan)* 785

Mr. Pickersgill 788
Mr. Carson 792
Mr. Bucknill 799
Mr. Knox 801
Sir E. Clarke 805
Mr. Walton 812
Lord Advocate 815
Sir F. Lockwood 816
Mr. Darling 819
Mr. Atherley-Jones 821
Mr. Wharton 823

Mr. Duncombe claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question. Debate resumed 823

Mr. T. M. Healy 824

First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move "That the Question be now put" 826

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The House divided :—Ayes, 185 ; Noes, 67.—(Division List, No. 167) 826

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."—The House divided :—Ayes, 210 ; Noes, 41.—(Division List, No. 168.)—Main Question put, and agreed to :—Bill Read a Second time, and committed 826

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... ... 826

Regular and Elders' Widows' Fund Bill :—Committee deferred 826

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill :—Committee deferred ... 826

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill :—Committee deferred 826

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill :—Committee deferred... 826

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES] :—Committee deferred 826

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND [CONTRIBUTION] :—Committee thereupon deferred 826

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION [CHARGE] :—Committee thereupon deferred 827

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION [INCREASED GRANT] :—Resolution reported—

Mr. T. M. Healy ... 827
Attorney General ... 827
Mr. Acland 827
First Lord of the Treasury 827
Mr. Gray 829
Sir John Gorst 830
Sir C. Dilke 831
Mr. Channing ... 831
Mr. Carvell Williams ... 832

Resolution agreed to 832

Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill :—To amend Section ninety-seven of the Elementary Education Act 1870 ; presented accordingly, and Read the First time—(196) 832

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE [ADVANCES] :—Resolution reported, and agreed to 832

Foreign Prison-Made Goods Bill :—Second Reading deferred 832

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned 833

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 833

[*April* 9.] *Page*

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 833

Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill :—After short Debate, Bill "to make further provision with respect to the relief of the destitute poor in Ireland; and for other purposes connected therewith"; presented, and Read the First time—(197)... 833

Bicycles (Ireland) Bill :—After short Debate, "Bill to make regulations with respect to Bicycles and other similar Machines in Ireland"; presented, and Read the First time—(198) 833

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 834

Bakehouses Bill :—Second Reading deferred 834

Midwives' Registration Bill :—Second Reading deferred 834

Prisoners' Personal Correction Prohibition Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 834

Chaff-Cutting Machines Accidents Bill :—Second Reading deferred 834

Trout Fishing Close Time (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 834

London Water Companies Amalgamation Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 835

Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Second Reading [7th April] further adjourned 835

Labour Bureaux Bill :—Second Reading deferred 835

Unlawful Possession Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [29th January] further adjourned 835

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 835

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 835

Land Law (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 835

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 835

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 835

MOTION.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE :—On the Motion, "That the House do now Adjourn :"—Questions, Sir C. Dilke and Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury... 835

COMMONS: FRIDAY, 9TH APRIL 1897.

QUESTIONS.

MADAGASCAR—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 837

HOUSE OF COMMONS (SALE OF INTOXICANTS)—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, Lord Stanley 837

POSTAGE (EMBOSSED STAMPS)—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 837

MARRIED SOLDIERS (MEDICAL ATTENDANCE)—Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, Under Secretary for War 838

[*April* 9.] *Page*

TRAWLING IN SCOTTISH WATERS—Questions, Mr. Haldane and Mr. Weir; Answers, Lord Advocate 838
WINCHESTER BARRACKS—Question, Mr. Myers; Answer, Under Secretary for War 840
PORT NESS HARBOUR, LEWIS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 840
MODEL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 840
MILITARY HOSPITAL (FELIXSTOWE)—Question, Mr. Goddard; Answer, Under Secretary for War 841
WORKMISTRESSES (IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 842
CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 842
ENLISTMENT REGULATIONS—Question, Mr. Hazell; Answer, Under Secretary for War 842
CROMARTY FIRTH (ANCHORAGE)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Under Secretary for War 843
TELEGRAPH OFFICES—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 843
WATER SUPPLY (CAUSER, INVERNESS-SHIRE)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 843
VOLUNTARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams; Answer, Vice President of the Council 844
TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Vice President of the Council 844
QUARTER SESSIONS CASE (NAAS, CO. KILDARE)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Under Secretary for War 845
THIRD-CLASS RAILWAY TICKETS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 846
PETTY SESSIONS (BELLEEK, CO. FERMANAGH)—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 846
ARMY MANŒUVRES—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secretary for War 846
CANADIAN FAST STEAMSHIP SERVICE—Question, General Laurie; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 847
LOCAL LOANS STOCK—Question, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 847
LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh and Major Jameson; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland... 848
SALISBURY PLAIN (PURCHASE)—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, Under Secretary for War 849
TELEPHONE SERVICE (GUERNSEY)—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 849
POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Questions, Mr. Monk, Mr. McCartan, and Mr. Vesey Knox; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 850
CUSTOMS OFFICERS—Questions, Mr. McCartan; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 851
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. McCartan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 852
HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty 854
SCHOOL BOARDS (WORKING BALANCE)—Question, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answer, Vice President of the Council 854
PIERS (LEWIS)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 855
IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury... 856
WATERFORD, DUNGARVAN, AND LISMORE RAILWAY—Questions, Mr. J. Redmond and Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury ... 856

[*April* 9.] *Page*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Channing, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir William Harcourt, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Vice President of the Council and First Lord of the Treasury 858

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Hedderwick and Sir E. Gourley; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Attorney General 860

TRISTAN DA CUNHA ISLAND—Question, Mr. Hedderwick; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 861

ARMY RIFLE MEETING (AMMUNITION)—Question, Captain Chaloner; Answer, Under Secrerary for War 861

MUSSEL BEDS—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Lord Advocate 862

IMPORT DUTY ON SPIRITS IN AFRICA—Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 862

LAW OFFICES—Question, Mr. Tritton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 862

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Question, Sir E. Gourley; Answer, First Commissioner of Works 862

WEIGHING CATTLE (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Birrell; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 863

RETAIL LICENCES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 864

TRANSVAAL—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 864

RETIRED SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' EMPLOYMENT—Questions, Mr. Brookfield and Mr. Dillon; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 865

MOTION.

Sunday Closing Bill:—To restrict the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sundays, Christmas Day and Good Friday; presented and Read the First time.—(201)... 866

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—[FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY]:—

Considered in Committee—

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897–8.

Class 1,—

1. £238,000, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings Great Britain 866

Vote agreed to 869

2. £159,100 to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.—Agreed to 869

3. £22,000, to complete the sum for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House 870

Amendment proposed, "That Item A (salaries, wages, and allowances) be reduced by £10, in respect of Holyrood Palace."—*(Mr. Weir)*... 870

Amendment withdrawn 870

[*April* 9.] *Page*

Further Amendment proposed, "That Item E (maintenance and repairs), be reduced by £10, in respect of Holyrood Palace."—*(Mr. Weir)*

Amendment withdrawn; Original Question put, and agreed to... ... 873

4. £70,000, to complete the sum for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens 873

Amendment proposed to reduce the Vote by £110.—*(Mr. Lough)* 886

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 52; Noes, 144.—(Division List, No. 169) 887

Original Question put, and agreed to 890

5. £23,000, to complete the sum for the Houses of Parliament Building 890

Amendment proposed, "That Item A (New Works, etc.) be reduced by £150, in respect of the formation of a new door to the Terrace."—*(Dr. Tanner)*—Negatived 899

Further Amendment proposed, "That item G (Maintenance of Refreshment Plant, House of Commons) be reduced by £10."—*(Dr. Tanner)* —Negatived; Original Question put, and agreed to 900

6. £25,000, to complete the sum for the Admiralty, Extension of Buildings 900

Vote agreed to 902

7. 39,000, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain... 902

Vote agreed to 904

8. £16,000, to complete the sum for Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain 904

Vote agreed to 908

9. £16,000, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings 908

Vote agreed to; Resolutions to be reported 909

£132,291, to complete the sum for the Survey of the United Kingdom, and for minor services connected therewith 909

Progress reported 918

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 918

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 918

Employers' Liability (Foreign Shipowners) Amendment Bill.—Second Reading deferred 918

Town Holdings (Tenants' Compensation) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 919

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE:—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy and Mr. Lewis; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 919

Verminous Persons Bill:—After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed 919

Sale of Distress Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 919

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 919

Parish Registers Bill:—Second Reading deferred 919

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 920

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—After short Debate, Second Reading deferred 920

Page

COMMONS: MONDAY, 12TH APRIL 1897.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT 1877 (ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD) (STATUTE):—Queen's Answer to the Address of 26th March... 921

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 921

Tithe Redemption Bill:—Second Reading deferred 921

QUESTIONS.

CHARGE OF BURGLARY (DOWNPATRICK)—Questions, Colonel Waring and Mr. Gilhooly; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland 921

UNCLAIMED FUNDS—Question, Mr. Gordon; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 923

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SHORTHAND WRITERS—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 923

SALE OF ESTATE (BANTRY, CO. CORK)—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 923

EDUCATION RESULTS FEES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 924

BELFAST CORPORATION AND LONDONDERRY IMPROVEMENT BILLS—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 924

LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. Knox, Mr. Dane, Mr. Macaleese, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Roche; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 925

DISTRESS (ACHILL ISLAND, CO. MAYO)—Question, Dr. Ambrose; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 928

KASSALA—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 928

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (EAST LANCASHIRE PAPER MILL COMPANY)—Question, Colonel Mellor; Answer, Home Secretary 929

IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. Dane and Mr. Plunkett; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 930

INDIAN FAMINE—Questions, Sir Seymour King, Mr. Bigwood, and Mr. Bryce; Answers, Secretary of State for India 931

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 933

POSTMASTERSHIP (MONAGHAN)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 934

WALLACE ESTATE (CO. ANTRIM)—Question, Mr. McCartan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 935

TELEGRAMS (BELFAST)—Question, Mr. Wolff; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 936

SCIENCE AND ART EXAMINATIONS—Question, Mr. Hobhouse; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 936

METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD—Question, Mr. Flower; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 936

GRANGEGORMAN PRISON—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 938

BANKRUPTCY ASSETS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland... 938

SULGRAVE NATIONAL SCHOOL (NORTHAMPTONSHIRE) — Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 939

PASSENGERS FROM AUSTRALIA—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 940

[*April* 12.] *Page*

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 941

GAMBLING IN OPTIONS AND FUTURES—Questions, Mr. Field; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 941

LAND TAX—Questions, Mr. Hardy; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 942

BELFAST ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL—Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 943

GOLD COAST—Questions, Mr. Goddard; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 943

POSTAL CHARGES—Questions, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 944

LIVERPOOL DOCKS (LOADING ACCIDENTS)—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith; Answer, Home Secretary 945

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Questions, Mr. Bell, Mr. Flannery and Captain Norton; Answers, Financial Secretary to the War Office, First Lord of Admiralty, and First Lord of the Treasury 945

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 946

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 946

TOKAT MASSACRE—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 947

NAVAL GUNS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 947

MILITIA TRAINING (QUEEN'S COUNTY)—Question, Dr. McDonnell; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 948

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COUNCIL—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Home Secretary 948

BRIXTON PRISON—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Home Secretary ... 949

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION (HEYWOOD)—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 949

CRETE—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... 950

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE (JUDICIAL BRANCH)—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Secretary of State for India 950

HIGHWAY ROBBERIES (LONDON)—Question, Mr. T. B. Curran; Answer, Home Secretary 951

LOCAL BYE-LAWS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Attorney General... 951

IVORY (CASE OF MR. EDWARD)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 952

KINGSTOWN HARBOUR ROADS BILL—Question, Mr. Plunkett; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 952

BIMETALLISM—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 953

ENLISTMENT REGULATIONS—Question, Captain Pirie; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 953

VENEZUELA BOUNDARIES—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 954

SCHOOL INSPECTORS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, Lord Advocate 954

SWINE FEVER (ESSEX)—Question, Mr. Round; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 955

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY (SIR RICHARD MARTIN'S REPORT)—Question, Mr. J. Morley; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 955

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS—Questions, Mr. Bainbridge and Mr. Carvell Williams; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 956

CAPE COLONY (VAAL DRIFTS)—Question, Mr. Parker Smith; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 956

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 957

MOTIONS.

Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction (Scotland) Bill :—To extend the Jurisdiction of Stipendiary Magistrates in Scotland; presented, and Read the First time.—(202) 957

Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill :—To extend the period of Repayment of Loans for Burial Grounds in Scotland; presented and Read the First time.—(203) 957

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER)—CRETE :—

Motion made—

> "That this House at its rising do adjourn till Monday, April 26th; that the Government business as far as and including the Order for the Committee on the Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill may be entered upon this night at any hour, though opposed, and be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House; and that, as soon as such business is disposed of, Mr. Speaker do Adjourn the House without Question put."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* 957

Sir C. Dilke 958
Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... 964
Sir W. Harcourt ... 974
First Lord of the Treasury 994
Mr. F. S. Stevenson ... 1006
Mr. Morton 1009
Admiral Field 1011
Mr. Dillon 1016
Mr. Legh 1024
Mr. Herbert Gladstone ... 1027
First Lord of the Admiralty ... 1028

Amendment proposed, to omit the words "That this House at its rising do adjourn until Monday 26th April."—*(Mr. Labouchere)* ... 1030

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." The House divided :—Ayes, 210; Noes, 49.—(Division List, No. 170) 1030

Mr. T. M. Healy ... 1030
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1031]

Motion agreed to 1032

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill :—Motion for leave to introduce.—*(Chief Secretary for Ireland)* 1032

Mr. Kearley 1041
Mr. John Redmond ... 1044
Mr. Carson 1046
Mr. T. M. Healy ... 1048
Mr. Dillon 1051
Mr. Plunkett 1052
Mr. Dane 1053
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1055

Question put and agreed to; Bill presented accordingly, and Read the First time.—(Bill 204) 1056

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND (CONTRIBUTION) :—Considered in Committee. Resolved,

> "That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to contribute, out of the Revenues of India, such sums as may be required to meet certain liabilities under any Act of the present Session to make provision for the transfer of the Assets, Liabilities and Management of the Regular Widows' Fund and of the Elders Widows' Fund to the Secretary of State in Council of India" 1056

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill :—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Read the Third time and passed 1056

[*April* 12.] Page

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation [Charge]:—Considered in Committee. Resolved,—

"That it is expedient to authorise the charge on the Revenues of India of any addition to the Superannuation or Retiring Allowances, which may become payable under any Act of the present Session to remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to officers on his establishment" ... 1056

Patent Office Extension [Expenses]:—Considered in Committee... ... 1057

Motion made,—

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Commissioner of Works under any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of Land for the Extension of the Patent Office, and for purposes connected therewith"—*(First Commissioner of Works)* 1057

After short Debate, the Committee divided:—Ayes, 131; Noes, 11.—(Division List, No. 171) 1057

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill:—Considered in Committee 1057

Clause 1,—(Superannuation Allowance to Assessor of Railways, etc., and Clerks, etc., employed by him) 1057

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "On and after the *passing of this Act*"—*(Mr. Caldwell)*... 1058

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause." The Committee divided:—Ayes, 127; Noes, 15.—(Division List, No. 172) 1059

Amendment proposed, after the words "Secretary for Scotland," to insert the words "with the consent of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1059

Amendment negatived 1061

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "*ten*," and to insert the word "*fifteen*"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1061

Question put, "That the word 'ten' stand part of the Clause." Committee proceeded to a Division 1061

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 173) 1061

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "*sixty*," and to insert instead the word "*sixty-five*"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1062

Question put, "That the word 'sixty' stand part of the Clause." Committee proceeded to a Division 1062

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 15, and Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 174) 1062

Amendment proposed, in paragraph IV. to leave out the word "*three*," and to insert the word "*five*"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1062

Question put, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Clause." Committee proceeded to a Division 1063

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 175) 1063

[*April* 12.] Page

Question put, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill." Committee proceeded to a Division 1063

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 13, and the Chairman declared that Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 176) 1064

Clause 2,—(Computation of Additional Years to Assessor) 1064

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "sixty," and insert the word "sixty-five"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1064

Question put, "That the word 'sixty' stand part of the Clause." Committee proceeded to a Division 1064

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 177) 1064

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "*twenty*," and to insert instead thereof the word "*five*"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1064

Question put, "That the word '*twenty*' stand part of the Clause." Committee divided:—Ayes, 121; Noes, 13. —(Division List, No. 178) 1065

Question put, "That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill. The Committee proceeded to a Division 1065

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 179) 1065

Clause 3,—(Liability of persons under sixty to be called upon to serve again) 1065

Question put, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill." Committee proceeded to a Division 1065

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 180.)... 1066

Clause 4,—(Allowance not to run concurrently with salary) 1066

Amendment proposed after the word "assessor," to add the words "or in any employment the payment for which comes out of the Imperial Treasury or out of local rates."—*(Mr. Caldwell)*... ... 1066

Question put, "That those words be there added."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 13; Noes, 124.—(Division List, No. 181) ... 1066

Question put, "That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."—The Committee proceeded to a Division 1066

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 182) 1066

Clause 5,—(Superannuation allowance for other services to be considered) 1067

Amendment proposed, after the word "assessor," to insert the words, "and other persons"—*(Mr. Caldwell)* 1067

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."—The Committee divided:—Ayes, 13; Noes, 122.—(Division List, No. 183) ... 1067

Question put, "That Clause 5 stand part of the Bill."—Committee proceeded to a Division 1067

Chairman of Ways and Means declared Division frivolously claimed, and directed Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 13, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 184) 1067

Clause 6,—(Mode of levying and collecting allowances)... 1067

Question, "That Clause 6 stand part of the Bill," put and agreed to ... 1067

Clause 7,—(Short title) 1067

Question, "That Clause 7 stand part of the Bill," put and agreed to; Bill reported, without amendment 1067

Motion made, "That the Bill be now Read the Third time."—(*Lord Advocate*) 1067

Amendment proposed, "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'Upon this day six months.'"—(*Dr. Clarke*) 1067

Question put. "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."—The House divided:—Ayes, 72, Noes, 12.—(Division List, No. 185.) Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill Read the Third time, and passed 1067

House adjourned at Twenty minutes after Three o'clock in the morning till Monday, 26th April 1067

COMMONS: MONDAY, 26TH APRIL 1897.

House re-assembled after the Easter Holidays 1069

NOTICES OF MOTION.

SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT—(*Major Rasch*) 1069

INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY (JUDICIAL DUTIES) (EXPENSE)—(*Mr. Harrison and Mr. W. Ambrose*, Harrow) 1069

CROWN LANDS AND COMMONS (WALES)—*Mr. Herbert Roberts*) 1069

QUESTIONS.

BOTTLING BEER—Question, Mr. McKenna; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1069

METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAYS—Questions, Mr. Weir and Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1070

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (LEWIS)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1070

POST OFFICE (HYDE)—Question, Mr. Sidebotham; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1071

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—Questions, Mr. Bartley and Dr. Farquharson; Answers, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1072

POSTAL FACILITIES (NEWTOWN CUNNINGHAM, COUNTY DONEGAL)—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1072

[*April* 26.] Page

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS ACT—Questions, Mr. Carvell Williams; Answers, Vice President of the Council 1073
REPLY LETTER CARDS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1073
TELEGRAPH OFFICES (BANK HOLIDAYS)—Question, Sir J. Lubbock; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1074
FRENCH TROOPS IN BAHR-EL-GHAZEL—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1074
ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 1075
GREECE AND THE POWERS—Questions, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Gibson Bowles, and Mr. Edward Morton; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury and Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs... 1075
ILLEGAL TRAWLING IN THE MORAY FIRTH—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1077

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill :—
Mr. J. Lowther ... 1077 *Mr. Speaker* ... 1079

Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading Deferred ... 1081

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill :—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Mr. T. Lough)* 1081

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words—

"In the opinion of this House, no Bill making further provision for aiding School Boards will be satisfactory which does not at least provide a sum amounting in the aggregate to five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in average attendance at Board Schools in England and Wales."—*(Mr. Channing)* 1083

Mr. Herbert Roberts ... 1087 *Mr. Cripps* 1104
Sir J. Lubbock ... ... 1090 *Mr. Carvell Williams* ... 1108
Sir H. Fowler ... ... 1093 *Vice President of the Council* 1109
Mr. Cohen ... ... 1099 *Mr. Buxton* 1114
Mr. Broadhurst ... ... 1102 *Mr. Knox* 1117

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." The House divided :—Ayes, 122; Noes, 41.—(Division List, No. 186.) Main Question put and agreed to. Bill Read a Second time and committed 1118

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND (CONTRIBUTION).—Resolution reported, and agreed to 1119

Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill :—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Read the Third time, and passed 1119

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (CHARGE) :—Resolution reported, and agreed to 1119

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill :—Considered in Committee and reported, without Amendment; to be Read the Third time upon Thursday ... 1119

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill :—Second Reading deferred... ... 1119

[*April* 26.] *Page*

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1119

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill:—After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and Committed for Thursday 1120

Volunteers' Bill:—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time"—*(Financial Secretary to the War Office)* 1120

After Short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and Committed 1121

SUPPLY (9TH APRIL):—Resolutions reported—

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897–8—

Class I,—

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £238,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel and sundry Miscellaneous Services" ... 1121

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £159,100 (including an additional sum of £1,100), be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1898, in respect of sundry public buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes" 1121

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House" 1122

4. "That a sum not exceeding £70,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens" 1122

5. "That a sum not exceeding £23,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings" 1122

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £25,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the extension of the Admiralty Buildings" 1122

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £39,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of miscellaneous legal buildings, viz., County Courts, Metropolitan Police Courts, and Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland" 1123

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £16,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain" 1123

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £16,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, and for the maintenance of certain cemeteries abroad" 1123

Resolutions agreed to 1123

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1123

Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1123

Bicycles (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1123

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Committee deferred 1123

Foreign Prison-Made Goods Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1123

[*April* 27.] Page

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (1st April) further adjourned 1124

Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1124

Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1124

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES]:—Resolution reported, and agreed to 1124

Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1124

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 1124

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 1124

House counted out 1124

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 27TH APRIL 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

TENURE AND OWNERSHIP OF LAND IN TOWNS—*(Mr. Morton)* 1125

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (OFFICIAL EXPENSES)—*(Mr. Hedderwick)* ... 1125

INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY (JUDICIAL DUTIES, EXPENSE)—*(Mr. Helder)*... 1125

BRITISH TRADE WITH CANADA—*(Sir Howard Vincent)* 1125

QUESTIONS.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (SCOTTISH WATERS)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 1126

TRUSTEE AND POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1126

LIGHTHOUSE (TUIMPAN HEAD)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1126

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Questions, Sir Edward Gourley, Mr. T. B. Curran, Mr. Crilly, and Dr. Farquharson; Answers, First Commissioner of Works and Under Secretary for War 1127

PIERS (LEWIS)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1128

IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell and Mr. Dane; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1129

MASSACRE AT EGHIM—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1129

PIRBRIGHT RANGES (VOLUNTEERS)—Question, Colonel Dalbiac; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1130

CRETE—Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Stevenson, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1131

TURCO-GREEK WAR—Questions, Mr. Maclean, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Morton, Mr. Channing, and Sir Edward Gourley; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs [Mr. Speaker] 1133

"MAYFLOWER" (THE LOG OF THE)—Question, Mr. Richards; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1135

TOKAT MASSACRE—Questions, Mr. Morton, Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1135

STATIONERY OFFICE PRINTING CONTRACTS—Question, Mr. Michael Austin; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1136

[*April* 27.] *Page*

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS—Question, Captain Bethell; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1136
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL—Questions, Mr. Bayley and Mr. Channing; Answers, Vice President of the Council ... 1137
MEDICAL INSPECTORSHIP OF PRISONS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Home Secretary 1137
CANADIAN TARIFF—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1138
ALLOTMENTS (CORNWALL)—Question, Sir Walter Foster; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1138
FUGITIVE SLAVES AT MOMBASA—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1139
CREWE (REPRESENTATION OF)—Questions, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for the Colonies ... 1139
TRANSVAAL (UITLANDERS)—Question, Mr. Newdigate; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1140
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. Robson and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury and President of the Board of Trade ... 1140

Coal Mines Regulation Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1141
County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland) Bill:—Order for the Second Reading this day read and discharged; Bill withdrawn 1141
Locomotives on Highways Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1141

MOTION.

Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Bill:—To amend the Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Act 1891, and the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act 1892; presented, and Read the First time.—(208) 1141

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST):—

Motion made—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the grievances of the officers on the General List of the Indian Army in the matter of their succession to Colonels' allowances, and to report to the House thereon." *(Mr. Heywood Johnstone)* 1142

Sir Seymour King ... 1150
Secretary of State for India 1154
Sir J. Fergusson 1161
General Russell 1162
Sir H. Fowler 1162

The House divided:—Ayes, 55; Noes, 174.—(Division List, No. 187) 1166

IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN MANUFACTURED GOODS:—

Motion made—

"That fully manufactured goods brought into this country from any foreign country should pay a toll for the benefit of the British labour thereby displaced of Ten pounds per centum ad valorem, and partly manufactured goods a Customs toll of half that amount, and that the proceeds should be applied in forming the nucleus of a national fund for the granting of weekly pensions to deserving and necessitous persons over 65 years of age, incapacitated from earning a livelihood by sickness or infirmity, or otherwise utilised for the benefit of British trade and labour."—*(Sir Howard Vincent)* 1166

[*April* 28.] *Page*

Captain Chaloner ... 1173
First Lord of the Treasury... 1173
Mr. Lowles 1179
Sir Howard Vincent 1180

Motion negatived 1180

PIERS AND HARBOURS:—

Motion made—

"That, in the opinion of this House, in the interests of trade and communication by sea between places on the coasts of England and Wales, and with a view to the protection and development of sea fisheries and the safety of the persons engaged in them, it is desirable that a Departmental Committee be appointed to inquire in what way and to what extent the existing provisions of piers and harbours on those coasts should be improved."—*(Mr. Edwin Lawrence)* 1180

House counted out 1180

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 28TH APRIL 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill:—Bill, as amended, considered; to be Read the Third time 1181

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Service Franchise Bill:—

Motion made—

"That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Mr. Harry Marks)* 1181

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words—

"This House refuses to add to the confusion and complexity of our present franchise system, which, in its opinion, can be remedied only by the adoption of a single, simple and uniform franchise."—*(Sir Charles Dilke)* 1181

Captain Norton 1188
Sir J. Blundell Maple ... 1189
Mr. McKenna 1191
Mr. Ascroft 1194
Mr. Lloyd-George ... 1196
Captain Jessel... 1196
Solicitor General 1197
Mr. Knox 1199
Colonel Hughes 1201
Mr. Dalziel 1202

Amendment withdrawn; Main Question put and agreed to; Bill Read a Second time 1202

Motion made, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc."—*(Mr. Marks)* 1202

After short Debate, Motion withdrawn; Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House 1205

School Board for London (Elections) Bill:—

Motion made—

"That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Sir J. Blundell Maple)* ... 1205

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*(Sir J. Lubbock)* 1206

[*April* 28.] Page

Mr. Brodie Hoare ... 1210
Mr. Stuart 1211
Colonel Hughes 1212
Mr. A. O'Connor ... 1213
Mr. Gedge 1214
Mr. Courtney 1215
Vice President of the Council... 1218

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."—The House divided:—Ayes, 80; Noes, 127.—(Division List, No. 188).—Words added.—Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.—Second Reading put off six months 1219

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1219

Parliamentary Elections (Mariners' Votes) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1219

Poor Law Franchise (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (24th February) further adjourned 1220

Prison Made Goods (Importation) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Aliens Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act (1896) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Shop Assistants (Half Holiday) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Restraint of Evictions (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Solicitors (Magistracy) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1220

Access to Mountains (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

Registration of Parliamentary Voters Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1221

Justices of the Peace Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill:—Second Reading deferred... 1221

Parish Registers Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 1221

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 1221

Shops (Early Closing) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

Shops Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

Land Tenure Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

County Secretaries Superannuation (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1221

Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1222

Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred... 1222

Estates Tail Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1222

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. (17th February), further adjourned 1222

Working Men's Dwellings Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1222

Police Pensions and Service Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1222

Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1222

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1222

Tenant Right in Towns (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1222

Licences (Ireland) Bill:—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn 1222

Rating of Machinery Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

[*April* 29.] Page

Land Law (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

Election Petitions Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

Mersey Channels Bill:—Committee deferred 1223

Bakehouses Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

London Water Companies Amalgamation Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1223

Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Second Reading (7th April) further adjourned 1223

Land Law (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1223

Verminous Persons Bill:—Considered in Committee. Clause 1—Committee report Progress 1224

Sale of Distress Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1224

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 1224

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1224

MOTION.

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment (No. 2) Bill:—To amend certain provisions of the Local Government Act 1894; presented and Read the First time.—(209) 1224

WAYS AND MEANS (BUDGET):—On the Question "That the House do now adjourn."—Questions, Mr. Lough and Mr. Knox; Answers, Sir W. Walrond 1224

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 29TH APRIL 1897.

QUESTIONS.

BETTING "PLACES" (HAWKE *v.* DUNN)—Questions, Mr. Duncombe and Sir J. Kennaway; Answers, Home Secretary 1225

POST OFFICE GRIEVANCES—Question, Mr. Duncombe; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1226

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1227

METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAYS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Home Secretary 1227

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Home Secretary 1228

ARMY QUARTERS (REMOVAL)—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1228

WATERSHEDS—Question, Mr. Hazell; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1229

MUZZLING DOGS—Question, Mr. Duncombe; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 1230

[*April* 29.] *Page*

WATER SUPPLY (LONDON)—Questions, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Woods; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1230
ILLEGAL TRAWLING (MORAY FIRTH)—Questions, General Russell and Sir C. Cameron; Answers, Lord Advocate 1231
MILITARY MANŒUVRES—Questions, General Russell and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, Under Secretary for War and the First Lord of the Treasury 1232
LAND COMMISSION—Question, Dr. Ambrose; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1233
CARLOWAY ROAD (LEWIS)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate... 1234
PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS (SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY)—Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1234
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Questions, Mr. Hogan and Mr. H. Foster; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies and Under Secretary for War 1235
TELEPHONE SERVICE (GLASGOW)—Questions, Mr. Begg and Sir C. Cameron; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1235
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1236
POSTMEN (CARDIFF)—Question, Mr. Maclean; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1237
BRITISH STEAMER STOPPED AT SYRA—Question, Mr. H. Roberts; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1237
IMMIGRANTS (EAST LONDON)—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Home Secretary 1237
IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1238
THAMES CONSERVANCY BYE-LAWS—Questions, Mr. Woods; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1238
TRANSVAAL (JAMESON RAID)—Question, Mr. T. Bayley; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1239
CRETE—Questions, Mr. H. Roberts, Mr. Hedderwick, and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1239
TURCO-GREEK WAR—Questions, Mr. Morton, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Gibson Bowles, and Mr. Coghill; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Under Secretary for War 1241
TOKAT MASSACRE—Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1242
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND (REPORT)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1243
POST OFFICE FACILITIES (LEWIS)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1243
POST OFFICE (DUBLIN)—Question, Mr. H. Foster; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1244
POSTAL FACILITIES (RUSHDEN, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE) — Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1244
VOLUNTARY AND BOARD SCHOOLS (GRANTS)—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1245
DEATH FROM CAT BITE—Question, Mr. Duncombe; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 1246
POSTMEN (PROVINCIAL TOWNS)—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1246
CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND)—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 1247
HOUSE OF COMMONS (DIVISIONS)—Questions, Mr. Duncombe; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 1247
POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT (REPORT)—Question, Mr. H. Foster; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1248

[*April* 29.] Page

SUPPLY (FOREIGN OFFICE VOTE)—Question, Sir Wm. Harcourt; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1248

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Viscount Cranborne; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1249

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL—Question, Mr. J. Lowther; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1249

NEW MEMBER MADE AFFIRMATION REQUIRED BY LAW:—Alfred Edward Pease, esquire, for the County of York, North Riding (Cleveland Division) 1249

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.]:—Read the First time.—(211) 1249

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WAYS AND MEANS:—Considered in Committee. Financial Statement (the Budget), 1897-8—*(Chancellor of the Exchequer)* 1250

Sir W. Harcourt 1277, 1301, 1335
Secretary of State for the Colonies 1284
Mr. Warner 1287
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 1287
Sir C. Dilke 1292
Mr. J. Lowther 1294
Mr. Courtney 1296
First Lord of the Treasury 1299, 1300, 1335
Mr. Richards 1303
Sir J. Pease 1303
Colonel Milward ... 1305
Mr. Spicer 1306
Sir H. Vincent 1307
Mr. Allan 1310
Mr. Cohen 1311
Mr. Lough 1312
Mr. Monk 1318
Mr. E. Robertson 1319
[*Chairman of Ways and Means* 1322]
First Lord of the Admiralty... 1323
Sir S. Montagu 1324
Mr. Bartley 1327
Mr. Knox 1327
Chancellor of the Exchequer ... 1332

TEA:—Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Duty of Customs now payable on Tea shall continue to be charged, levied, and paid on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):—Tea . . . . the pound . Four Pence."—*(The Chancellor of the Exchequer)* 1336

Motion withdrawn 1336

INCOME TAX:—Resolved, that Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, at the rate of eightpence 1336

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee report Progress ... 1336

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill:—Read the Third time, and passed 1336

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill:—Second Reading deferred... ... 1336

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill:—Considered in Committee; reported without Amendment; Read the Third time, and passed 1336

Volunteers Bill:—Committee deferred 1337

Dangerous Performances Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1337

Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill:—Committee deferred ... 1337

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill:—Read a Second time, and committed 1337

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1337
Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1337
Bicycles (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1338
Foreign Prison-Made Goods Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1338
Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned 1338
Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1338
Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1338
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1338
Local Authorities' Officers' Superannuation Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 1338
Cottage Homes Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 1338
Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1338
Congested Districts Board (Ireland) (Compulsory Purchase Powers) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Accountants' Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Sale of Food and Drugs Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Truck Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Solicitors (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Chaff-Cutting Machines Accidents Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Poor Law Officers' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Locomotives on Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1339
Service Franchise Bill :—Committee deferred 1340
Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned... 1340
Shop Assistants (Half-Holiday) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1340
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 1340
Police Pensions and Service Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1340
Mersey Channels Bill :—Committee deferred 1340
Verminous Persons Bill :—Committee deferred 1340
Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 1340
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1340

COMMONS: FRIDAY, 30TH APRIL 1897.

QUESTIONS.

VACCINATION (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Question, General Laurie; Answer, Secretary to the Local Government Board 1341
SOLOMON ISLANDS—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1341

[*April* 30.] *Page*

SALT (H.M. SHIPS)—Question, Sir C. Cameron; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 1342

SCIENCE AND ART GRANTS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Sir C. Cameron; Answer, Lord Advocate 1342

WATERLOO AND CITY RAILWAY—Questions, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Schwann, and Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, President of the Board of Trade ... 1342

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1343

POST OFFICE SERVICE—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1344

"MARS" (BATTLESHIP)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 1344

STATIONERY (ADMIRALTY)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Admiralty 1344

FISHERY CRUISER "VIGILANT"—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1345

BROOKEBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 1346

PLAGUE (INDIAN TRANSPORT "DILWARA")—Question, Sir Walter Foster; Answer, Secretary to the Local Government Board 1346

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1347

TRAIN SERVICE (EUSTON AND HOLYHEAD)—Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1347

POSTMASTERSHIP (MONAGHAN)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1348

RAILWAY CARRIAGES (OVERCROWDING)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1349

ILLEGAL TRAWLING—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate ... 1349

RELIEF MONEY AND TAXATION IN ASIA MINOR—Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1349

ACCIDENT TO PLATELAYERS—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1350

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Question, Sir Howard Vincent; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1350

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Provand; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 1351

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1351

SUPPLY (IRISH BOARD OF WORKS VOTE)—Questions, Mr. Power and Mr. J. Redmond; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1352

WAYS AND MEANS (BUDGET RESOLUTIONS)—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1352

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY:—Considered in Committee.—[SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY]—

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897-8.

Class III.

1. £43,177, to complete the sum for the Affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury, Queen's Proctor, and Director of Public Prosecutions 1353

Amendment proposed, "That Item H (Salaries) be reduced by £100 in respect of the salary of the Director of Public Prosecutions."—*(Mr. Pickersgill)* 1353

[*April* 30.] *Page*

Amendment withdrawn; Vote agreed to 1358
2. £22,300, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses ... 1358
Vote agreed to 1360
3. £204,451, to complete the sum for Supreme Court of Judicature ... 1360
Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £100.—*(Mr. Gibson Bowles)* 1368
Amendment withdrawn; Vote agreed to 1369
4. £5,177, to complete the sum for Land Registry 1369
Vote agreed to 1374
5. £23,071, to complete the sum for County Courts 1374
Amendment proposed, "That Item H, of £3,000, for Conveyance of Persons Committed to Prison, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—*(Sir C. Cameron)* 1378
The Committee divided:—Ayes, 54; Noes, 133.—(Division List, No. 189.) Original Question put, and agreed to 1380
6. £3,400, to complete the sum for Police Courts, London and Sheerness 1381
Vote agreed to 1382
7. £41,107, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Police 1382
Amendment proposed, "That item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chairman of Commissioners and Directors."—*(Mr. Pickersgill)* 1382
Amendment withdrawn; Original Question put, and agreed to ... 1384
8. £420,851, to complete the sum for the Prisons in England, Wales and the Colonies 1384
Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £100.—*(Mr. Pickersgill)* 1385
Amendment withdrawn 1388
Vote agreed to 1392
9. £126,130, to complete the sum for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain 1393
Vote agreed to 1397
10. £21,954, to complete the sum for the Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum.—Agreed to 1398
11. £62,630, to complete the sum for Law Charges and Courts of Law, Scotland.—Agreed to 1398
12. £28,961, to complete the sum for the Register House, Edinburgh.—Agreed to 1398
13. £3,350, to complete the sum for Crofters' Commission.—Agreed to 1398
14. £52,277, to complete the sum for Prisons, Scotland 1398
Vote agreed to; Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ... 1401
Building Feus and Leases (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1401

MOTION.

Public Health Acts Amendment Bill:—To amend the Public Health Act and Amendment Act 1890; presented, and Read the First time.—(212)... 1402

[*May* 3.] *Page*

WAYS AND MEANS [29TH APRIL] :—Resolution reported, and agreed to.—Bill ordered to be brought in 1402

WAYS AND MEANS :—Committee deferred 1402

Plumbers' Registration Bill :—After short Debate, Bill Read a Second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. 1403

Manhood Suffrage (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1404

Rating (Places of Worship and Schools) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1404

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill :—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Mr. Hobhouse)* 1404

House counted out 1404

LORDS: MONDAY, 3RD MAY 1897.

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill :—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 57] 1405

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill :—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 58] 1405

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill :—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 59] 1405

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill :—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 60] 1405

Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill :—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 61] 1405

Trusts (Scotland) Bill :—Read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House 1405

COMMONS: MONDAY, 3RD MAY 1897.

QUESTIONS.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL, GRAY'S INN ROAD—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 1406

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1407

BEAM AND OTTER TRAWLING—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1407

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1407

HERRING BRAND FEES—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate ... 1408

MUSSEL BEDS—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Lord Advocate 1408

AUXILIARY POSTMEN (SUNDAY DUTY)—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1408

DOG MUZZLING—Questions, Mr. Lough; Answers, President of the Board of Agriculture 1409

POST OFFICE EXTENSIONS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1410

BOTTLING BEER—Question, Mr. McKenna; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1410

JUVENILE PRISONERS—Question, Mr. Paulton; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1411

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Questions, Mr. Hogan and Captain Bagot; Answers, First Commissioner of Works and Secretary of State for India... 1411

[*May* 3.] *Page*

PACIFIC CABLE COMPANY—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1412
POST OFFICE (THURLES, CO. TIPPERARY)—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1412
CHANNEL PASSENGER SERVICE (CUSTOMS EXAMINATION)—Questions, Mr. Malcolm and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1413
POSTAL DELIVERY (GRANGE, YOUGHAL)—Question, Mr. Shee; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1414
BARBED WIRE FENCES—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Attorney General for Ireland 1414
GENERAL POST OFFICE (LONDON)—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1415
HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY EXERCISES—Questions, Mr. Newdigate, Mr. Gibson Bowles, and Sir C. Dilke; Answers, First Commissioner of Works ... 1415
TURKO-GREEK WAR—Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1416
TRANSVAAL (VAAL DRIFTS)—Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1417
SEWAGE (COVENTRY)—Question, Mr. Murray; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1417
IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1418
STEAMSHIP "DARWIN"—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 1418
CROFTERS' COMMISSION (REPORT)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1419
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1420
WALLACE BEQUEST—Questions, Dr. Farquharson; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 1420
FOREIGN CODES OF LAW—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 1421

Police Appointment and Promotion Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1421

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill:—Motion for leave to introduce. —*(Home Secretary)* 1421

Mr. Asquith 1433
Sir A. Forwood 1442
Mr. Haldane 1444
Secretary of State for the Colonies ... 1447, 1461
Mr. Stuart-Wortley ... 1448
Sir C. Dilke 1451
Mr. Drage 1454
Mr. Allan 1456
Mr. G. Whiteley... ... 1458
Sir J. Pease 1460
Mr. Bousfield 1473
Mr. Ure 1475
Colonel Blundell... ... 1478
Mr. Harwood 1479
Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk Burghs) 1480
Mr. J. Havelock Wilson ... 1481
Mr. Warr 1482
Mr. Bucknill 1484
Mr. S. Evans 1486
Mr. Wolff 1486
Mr. Butcher 1487
Mr. Kearley 1489
Mr. Richards 1489
Sir W. Wills 1490
Mr. Oldroyd 1490
Mr. Robson 1491
Home Secretary 1491

[*May* 3.] *Page*

Bill ordered to be brought in; presented accordingly, and Read the First time.—[213] 1492

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill :—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second Time."—*(President, Board of Trade)* 1492

Mr. Havelock Wilson ... 1497
Sir A. Forwood 1498
President of the Board of Trade 1499

Bill Read a Second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. 1499

Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill :—Considered in Committee; Bill reported without Amendment; Read the Third Time, and passed 1499

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill :—Motion made, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Under Secretary, Home Department)* 1500

Mr. Pickersgill 1503

Debate adjourned 1505

Volunteers Bill :—Bill considered in Committee 1505

Clause 1,—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday ... 1505

Dangerous Performances Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1505

SUPPLY [30TH APRIL] :—Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES, 1896-7 :—

Class III,—(Votes 1 to 14) 1506

Resolutions agreed to 1507

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill :—Committee deferred 1508

Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1508

Bicycles (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1508

Foreign Prison-Made Goods Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1508

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned 1508

Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1508

Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1508

Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1508

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill :—Committee deferred 1508

Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill :—Committee deferred ... 1508

Berriew School Bill :—Third Reading deferred 1509

SUPPLY :—Committee deferred 1509

WAYS AND MEANS :—Committee deferred 1509

Warehousemen's Certificates Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

Cemeteries Rating Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

University Education (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

Registration of Firms Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

Midwives' Registration Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

[*May* 4.] *Page*

Tithe Redemption Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1509

Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1510

Sale of Distress Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1510

Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1510

Truck Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 1510

Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1510

Chaff-Cutting Machines Accidents Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1510

Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1510

Service Franchise Bill :—Considered in Committee; Committee report progress ... 1511

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 1511

Police Pensions and Service Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1511

Mersey Channels Bill :—Committee deferred 1511

Verminous Persons Bill :—Committee deferred 1511

County Councils (Qualification of Women) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1511

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1511

Militia Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1511

Canals Protection (London) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1511

Parish Registers Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1512

Locomotives on Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1512

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 1521

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1512

BURIAL GROUNDS :—*(Mr. J. W. Sidebotham)* 1512

MOTION.

Extraordinary Tithe Bill :—To remove doubts arising under the Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act 1886; presented, and Read the First time—(214) 1512

LORDS: TUESDAY, 4TH MAY 1897.

Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill :—Brought from the Commons, Read 1a—[No. 64] 1513

Land Transfer Bill [H.L.] :—Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments—[No. 62] 1513

Sunday Bill [H.L.] :—Bill to amend an Act passed in 1781 for preventing certain abuses and profanations on the Lord's Day called Sunday; presented by Lord Hobhouse, and Read 1a—[No. 63] 1513

Page

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 4TH MAY 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Improved Harbour Accommodation (Coast of Scotland)—*(Sir William Wedderburn)* 1513

Mining Royalties—*(Mr. Atherley-Jones)* 1514

Education (Wales)—*(Mr. Herbert Roberts)* 1514

QUESTIONS.

Warden Estate (Sneem, Co. Kerry)—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1514

Constabulary (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Lord Advocate 1515

Post Office Savings Bank—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1515

Loan Fund Societies (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1516

Queen's Diamond Jubilee—Questions, Mr. Dane, Mr. Loder, and Mr. Lowles; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland, Vice President of the Council, and Home Secretary 1517

Fishery Board (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Lord Advocate 1518

Local Government Board (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Lord Advocate 1518

Private Bill Procedure—Question, Mr. David Thomas; Answer, Home Secretary 1518

Food Supplies (United Kingdom)—Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, First Lord of the Admiralty 1519

Justices of the Peace (Scotland)—Question, Sir T. Gibson-Carmichael; Answer, Lord Advocate 1520

Foreign Lotteries—Question, Mr. Hubbard; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1520

Postmen (Bolton)—Question, Mr. Harwood; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1521

Autumn Manœuvres (Scotland)—Question, Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); Answer, Under Secretary for War 1522

Illegal Trawling (Danish Waters)—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Lord Advocate 1523

Postmen (Pontypridd)—Question, Mr. A. Thomas; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1523

British Columbia—Question, Mr. J. Roche; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1523

Crete—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1524

Irish Mail Service—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1525

[*May* 4.] *Page*

CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1525

TURCO-GREEK WAR—Questions, Mr. Dalziel; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1526

AUXILIARY POSTMEN (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1526

MONAGHAN UNION—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1527

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Question, Mr. Crilly; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1257

BETTING MESSAGES—Question, Mr. Ascroft; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1528

CANADIAN MAIL SERVICE—Question, Mr. Vesey Knox; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1528

BOARD OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1529

TEACHERS' PENSION FUND (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1529

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. J. Bryce; Answer, Lord Advocate 1530

POSTAL REFORM—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury... 1530

EARTHQUAKE (WEST INDIES)—Question, Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1530

MOTIONS.

Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill:—To amend the law relating to Fisheries in Ireland; presented, and Read the First time.—(216 1531

Jurors' Expenses Bill:—To provide for the payment of the expenses of Jurors attending Assizes and Quarter Sessions; presented, and Read the First time.—(217) 1531

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

HABITUAL OFFENDERS AND ADULT REFORMATORIES:—Motion made:—

"That, in view of the increasing ratio of habitual offenders and misdemeanants in our prison population, the inadequacy of the existing law to deter or reform them, the cost involved in their repeated imprisonments, and their demoralising influence upon the community, this House considers the institution of adult reformatories for their special treatment, as recommended by the recent Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders (Scotland), to be a matter deserving the early attention of Her Majesty's Government."—*(Sir C. Cameron)* 1531

Dr. Farquharson 1539

House counted out at Ten minutes before Five of the Clock 1540

Page

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 5TH MAY 1897.

Mines Eight Hours Bill :—Motion made, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Mr. W. Allen)* 1541

Sir Walter Foster ... 1544 *Sir Alfred Hickman* 1551
Sir Elliott Lees 1549

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—*(Mr. David Thomas)* 1553

Sir J. Joicey ... ... 1556 *Mr. Pickard* 1573
Sir C. Dilke ... ... 1567 *Mr. Legh* 1575
Mr. J. Wilson (Durham) 1568 *Mr. Bainbridge* 1578

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." The House divided :—Ayes, 186 ; Noes, 227.—(Division List, No. 190—appended) 1580

Words added. Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.—Second Reading put off for six months 1583

Boiler Inspection and Registration Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1583

Borough Funds Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1583

Law of Libel Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1583

Working Men's Dwellings (No. 2) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1583

Merchant Shipping Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1584

Industrial and Provident and Incorporated Building Societies (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1584

Teind Court (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1584

Coal Mines Regulation Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1585

Parliamentary Elections (Mariners' Votes) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1585

Restraint of Evictions (London) Bill—Second Reading deferred 1585

Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1585

Solicitors (Magistracy) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1585

Justices of the Peace Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1585

Local Government (County Council Clerks) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1585

Public Health Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1585

SUPPLY :—Committee deferred 1585

WAYS AND MEANS :—Committee deferred 1585

Cemeteries Rating Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1586

Registration of Firms Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1586

Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland) Bill :—Read a Second time, and Committed 1586

[*May* 6.] *Page*

Police Pensions and Service Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1586

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) (No. 2) Bill : —Second Reading deferred 1586

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1586

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill :—Order for Second Reading read and discharged ; Bill withdrawn 1586

School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1586

Trawlers' Licensing Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1586

Appointment of High Sheriffs (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1586

Succession (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1587

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Town Holdings (Tenants' Compensation) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1587

Shops (Early Closing) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Shops Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Estates Tail Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Bakehouses Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned 1587

Sale of Distress Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1587

Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1588

Chaff-Cutting Machine Accidents Bill :—Read a Second time, and committed ... 1588

Mersey Channels Bill :—Considered in Committee and reported, without Amendment 1588

Parish Registers Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1588

Locomotives on Highways Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1588

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 1588

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1588

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL)—Report from Chairmen's Panel 1588

LORDS : THURSDAY, 6TH MAY 1897.

Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill :—After short Debate, Read 2a, and committed 1589

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 6TH MAY 1897.

QUESTIONS.

CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS—Questions, Mr. Woods and Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1590
VACCINATION (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Secretary to the Local Government Board 1592
STRIKE AT NORWICH (INTIMIDATION)—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Home Secretary 1592
ARMY SCHOOLMASTERS—Question, Mr. Yoxall; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1593
POSTMEN (NOTTINGHAM)—Question, Mr. Yoxall; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1593
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE—Questions, Mr. Lafone and Mr. Bartley; Answers, Home Secretary and First Commissioner of Works 1594
ACHILL ISLAND—Question, Dr. Ambrose; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1595
ACCOUNTS OFFICE (INDIA)—Question, Mr. H. Roberts; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1595
LONGFORD CANAL HARBOUR—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1596
RATES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1597
LAND COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1597
PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT—Question, Mr. McKillop; Answer, Lord Advocate 1598
WEST INDIA COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1598
CANADIAN TARIFF—Question, Mr. J. Roche; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1599
PENNY POSTAGE—Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton and Mr. Arnold-Forster; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1599
RIVER SUCK DRAINAGE—Questions, Mr. Kilbride; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury... 1601
MANURES (GALWAY AND MAYO)—Question, Mr. Kilbride; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1602
IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. MacNeill and Mr. Crilly; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1602
EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS—Question, Mr. MacNeill; Answer, Home Secretary 1603
WATTISFIELD TOWN ESTATE CHARITY, SUFFOLK—Question, Mr. Goddard; Answer, Mr. Grant Lawson 1604
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—Questions, Captain Donelan, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Knox; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1605
PARISH COUNCILS—Questions, Mr. Logan; Answers, Secretary to the Local Government Board 1606
TELEGRAPH WIRES (CITY OF LONDON)—Questions, Mr. Lough and Mr. Gibbs; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1606
JURORS (CO. TYRONE)—Question, Mr. Murnaghan; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1608
BRIGADE OF GUARDS (ROUTE MARCHING)—Questions, Mr. Arnold-Forster; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1608

[*May* 6.] *Page*

CUSTOMS (PREVENTIVE OFFICERS AND BOATMEN)—Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1608
AGRICULTURAL RATING ACT 1896—Questions, Mr. Knox, Mr. J. Redmond, and Mr. Dillon; Answers, Secretary to the Local Government Board, Secretary to the Treasury, and Chief Secretary for Ireland [Mr. Speaker] 1610
POSTAL ORDERS—Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury... 1611
DEATH OF WORKHOUSE INMATE (CITY OF LONDON)—Question, Mr. Crilly; Answer, Secretary to the Local Government Board 1613
AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL—Questions, Mr. Molloy and Mr. Dillon; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1613
CAPE GARRISON—Question, Mr. Arnold-Forster; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1614
SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS (1ST BATTALION)—Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1614
CRETE—Questions, Mr. Bryce; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1615
ROYAL PATRIOTIC COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Kearley; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1615
SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (CAPTURE OF)—Questions, Admiral Field and Mr. Caldwell; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1616
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. J. Morley and Mr. Burt; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary 1617

Metropolitan Police Courts (Holidays) Bill:—Presented and Read the First time.—(220) 1617

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS (BUDGET RESOLUTIONS):—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair"... 1618

AGRICULTURAL RATING (IRELAND):—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words:—

"In the opinion of this House, the Agricultural Rating Act of last year, not having been extended to Ireland, operates as a bounty to the English farmer as against the Irish farmer who is competing with him in the same markets, and that it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government in the financial proposals of the year to remove this inequality, and to grant to the Irish farmer the same measure of relief from rates which has been given to the English farmer."—*(Mr. Vesey Knox)* 1618

[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1626]
Mr. Plunkett 1631
Chancellor of the Exchequer 1633
Mr. Carson 1644
Mr. Grant Lawson ... 1646
Mr. Rentoul 1649
Mr. Cripps 1653
Mr. Serjeant Hemphill ... 1655
Mr. P. J. Power ... 1658
Mr. Arnold-Forster ... 1660
Mr. Bartley 1663
Mr. J. P. Farrell 1665
Mr. Lecky 1666
Mr. MacNeill... 1670
Captain Pretyman 1670
Sir H. Fowler... 1671
First Lord of the Admiralty... 1678
Mr. Clancy 1685
Colonel Saunderson 1688
Mr. Dane 1691
Mr. T. M. Healy 1693

[*May* 6.] *Page*

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." The House divided—Ayes, 219; Noes, 127.—(Division List—No. 191—appended) 1694

Main Question put, and agreed to... 1697

WAYS AND MEANS :—Considered in Committee. Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow 1697

Metropolitan and other Police Courts Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [3rd May] further adjourned 1697

Volunteers' Bill :—Committee deferred 1697

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill :—Committee deferred ... 1697

Berriew School Bill :—Third Reading deferred 1697

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.] :—Second Reading deferred 1697

Dangerous Performances Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1698

Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1698

Bicycles (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1698

Foreign Prison Made Goods Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1698

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned 1698

Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1698

Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill :—Committee deferred ... 1698

County Government (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 1699

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1699

Employers' Liability (Foreign Shipowners) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1699

Tithe Redemption Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1699

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned 1699

Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland) Bill :—Order for Committee read, and discharged. Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. ... 1700

Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned... 1700

Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1700

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill :—Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned 1700

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill :—Second Reading deferred... 1700

END OF VOL. XLVIII.

BILLS DEALT WITH IN VOL. XLVIII.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Agricultural Produce (Marks)	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, April 7.
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland)	Read 1^{o}, April 12.
Allotments (London) [H.L.]	Read 1^{a}, April 5.
Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland)	Read 2^{o}, April 29.
Archdeaconry of Cornwall	Read 1^{a}, May 3.
Berriew School	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, April 8.
Bicycles (Ireland)	Read 1^{o}, April 8.
Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland)	Debate on Second Reading, April 7.
Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill	Read 1^{o}, April 12.
Canals Protection (London)	Read 1^{o}, Mar. 30.
Chaff-cutting Machine Accidents	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, May 5.
Conveyancing [H.L.]	Read 1^{a}, April 6.
County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland)	Withdrawn, April 27.
Crays Gas	Royal Assent, April 8.
Dublin Corporation	Read 1^{a}, and referred to Examiners, April 5.
Dumbarton County Buildings	Royal Assent, April 8.
East India Company's Officers' Superannuation	Read 1^{a}, May 3.
Edinburgh American Land Mortgage Company, Limited	Royal Assent, April 8.
Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage)	Read 1^{a}, May 4.
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, April 26.
Extraordinary Tithe	Read 1^{o}, May 3.
Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment	Read 1^{o}, May 4.
Great Western Railway (Additional Powers)	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Mar. 30.
Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) [H.L.]	Read 3^{a}, and Passed, April 1.
Idiots' Institutions (Exemption from Rates)	Read 1^{o}, April 7.
Industries (Ireland)	Read 2^{o}, and Committed, Mar. 30.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Jurors' Expenses	Read 1°, May 4.
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer	Withdrawn, April 1.
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway	Considered as Amended, April 5.
Land Transfer [H.L.]	Reported from Committee, May 4.
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases)	Read 2°, and Committed, April 8.
Licences (Ireland)	Withdrawn, April 28.
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament)	Debate on Second Reading, April 9.
Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans	Read 1°, April 27.
Local Government Act (1894) Amendment	Debate on Second Reading, April 30.
Local Government Act (1894) Amendment (No. 2)	Read 1°, April 28.
Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 1)	Royal Assent, April 8.
London and North Western Railway (Wales)	Considered as Amended, April 28.
Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland)	Read 2°, May 5.
Merchant Shipping (Undermanning)	Read 2°, and Committed, May 3.
Mersey Channels	In Committee, May 5.
Metropolitan and Other Police Courts	Debate on Second Reading, May 3.
Metropolitan Police Courts (Holidays)	Read 1°, May 6.
Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment	Royal Assent, April 8.
Military Works	Royal Assent, April 8.
Mines (Eight Hours)	Second Reading negatived, May 5.
Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women)	Withdrawn, May 5.
Navy and Marine (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment	Read 1ª, May 3.
Patent Office Extension	In Committee, April 12.
Plumbers' Registration	Read 2°, and Committed, April 30.
Poor Relief (Ireland)	Read 1°, April 8.
Post Office Consolidation [H.L.]	Read 1°, April 29.
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment	Reported without Amendment, April 8.
Public Health Acts Amendment	Read 1°, April 30.
Public Health (Scotland)	Read 2°, and Committed, April 1.
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site	In Committee, April 5.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland)	Read 2^{a}, and Committed, May 6.
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation	Read 1^{a}, May 3.
Regular and Elders' Widows' Fund	Read 1^{a}, May 3.
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment	Debate on Second Reading, April 5.
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2)	Read 1^{o}, Mar. 30.
School Board for London (Elections)	Second Reading negatived, April 28.
Service Franchise	In Committee, May 3.
South Metropolitan Gas	Royal Assent, April 8.
South Yorkshire Junction Railway	Royal Assent, April 8.
Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction (Scotland)	Read 1^{o}, April 12.
Sunday [H.L.]	Read 1^{a}, May 4.
Sunday Closing	Read 1^{o}, April 9.
Thompson's Divorce	Royal Assent, April 8.
Trawlers' Licensing	Read 1^{o}, April 6.
Trusts (Scotland)	Read 2^{a}, and Committed, May 3.
Verminous Persons	In Committee, April 28.
Voluntary Schools	Royal Assent, April 8.
Volunteers	In Committee, May 3.
Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment	Read 1^{o}, April 6.
Working Men's Dwellings	Withdrawn, April 1.
Workmen's (Compensation for Accidents)	Read 1^{o}, May 3.

ERRATUM.

Page 1257. *The sentence commencing in line* 44 *should read as follows:—*

"Out of the total Death Duties the Estate Duty produced £10,548,000, and of this, Realty paid £1,871,000 on a total value of £39,606,000; whilst Personalty paid £8,677,000 on a total value of £179,803,000."

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Authorised Edition)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT* OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*
APPOINTED TO MEET JANUARY 19, 1897, IN THE SIXTIETH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1897.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 30th March 1897.

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The DUKE of DEVONSHIRE), who, on rising to move the Second Reading of the Voluntary Schools Bill, was received with cheers, said: My Lords,—In moving the Second Reading of this Bill my task will be a much easier but perhaps a less satisfactory one than it would have been if it had been my duty to move the Second Reading of the Bill which was introduced by Her Majesty's Government last year upon the same subject. The present Measure is one which covers a very small scope. It consists of only three provisions, contained in three very simple clauses, only one of which has met with very serious opposition in the other House, and only one of which, as I venture to think, will cause any considerable difference of opinion amongst your Lordships. I need, I think, take very little of your Lordships' time in referring to what I may call the two minor provisions of this Bill—that which removes what is known as the 17s. 6d. limit, and that which refers to the exemption from rating of Voluntary Schools The obvious intention of the 17s. 6d. limit which was to provide the means by which voluntary subscriptions should be maintained in proportion to the grant, has not been fully attained. The limit has acted rather as a discouragement to attempts to attain the highest degree of efficiency with the means at the disposal of the managers of the school than to attain the object with which it was proposed—namely, that of keeping up the subscriptions. It has also had the effect, I am afraid, of leading to some irregularities in the keeping of the accounts both of Board and Voluntary Schools, inasmuch as its tendency has been to offer some inducement to showing in the accounts a larger amount of income, from other sources than the grant, than that which has actually been received. I think that is all I need say upon the subject of the 17s. 6d. limit. As to the clause which exempts Voluntary Schools from the payment of rates, that is a liability which has imposed an extremely unequal burden on schools in various localities. In the great majority of cases schools have been rated at only a nominal amount; in some cases they have been rated at their full value, and every variety of practice has prevailed between those two extremes, thereby not only imposing a very unequal charge upon schools in different portions of the country, according to the disposition of the rating authority in regard to the schools, but it had also introduced an uncertainty into the financial administration of the schools which is extremely injurious to anything like sustained and prudent administration. ["Hear, hear!"] I think it is unnecessary for me to say more, on this occasion at all events, upon either of these two points. If they meet with any serious and full examination at your Lordships' hands that examination will probably be conducted more conveniently in Committee on the Bill than in a Debate upon the Second Reading, and I shall come at once to what I have to say as to the main enactment of the Bill, which is that of a provision of a grant in aid to Voluntary Schools, and the arrangement which it is proposed shall be made for the distribution of that grant. As I have already mentioned, the Bill of last year was a very large one, and covered a very large portion of the field of education. That Bill intended to decentralise the administration of elementary education, and to establish a new education authority in counties and county boroughs, which it was hoped would be able to greatly improve the elementary education in rural districts and which would, both in rural and in urban districts, have co-ordinated and brought into proper relations with each other primary and secondary education. That Bill provided a grant in aid for the relief of Voluntary and also of necessitous Board Schools, and it created a machinery for the distribution of that grant in aid. The Bill further proposed to deal in what was, at all events, intended to be a fair and impartial spirit—fair both to members of the Church and to Nonconformists—with the grievances under which both felt that they suffered under the Cowper-Temple clause of the Act of 1870. While that Bill was in no sense intended to cripple or limit the action of the School Boards, which we recognised had in the vast majority of cases been engaged in a useful and efficient work, it did give to the directly-elected representatives of the ratepayers certain powers of control over the expenditure of the School Boards, and it proposed to substitute for School Boards, under certain conditions, an educational authority in rural districts which it was thought was better adapted to the wants of those districts than the School Boards which had been established in 1870. Without entering into the merits or demerits of that Bill, it is sufficient, perhaps, for our purpose to-day to say that, whatever were its merits or demerits, it was at all events found too large a Measure to offer any chance of being successfully passed through the other House of Parliament in the conditions in which that House at present conducts its business. ["Hear, hear!"] That Bill did undoubtedly arouse the suspicions of the friends and supporters of School Boards. It was suspected of an intention which never existed, of being aimed at the usefulness and efficiency of the School Boards. Unexpected difficulties were found in the constitution of the new educational authority, and even some of the friends of Voluntary Schools appeared to view the constitution of that authority with a certain amount of jealousy. The grant in aid which was offered to Voluntary Schools and to Board Schools was insufficient in amount to arouse on the part of either of them that amount of enthusiasm and active support which would have been necessary to pass through Parliament a Bill so comprehensive and far-reaching as that one. When that Bill was withdrawn a pledge was given by the Government—a pledge was given especially to the supporters of the Government, who were in no sense committed to a wide-reaching reform of our educational system, but who were almost universally deeply committed to some measure of relief to Voluntary Schools—that at the earliest possible period in the present Session a Bill would be introduced which should provide at least the same amount of relief to Voluntary Schools as the Measure which was withdrawn had done, and that that Measure should be so limited in its extent and scope as to avoid the danger of the risk of a second failure owing to the undue multiplication of the topics with which it should deal, or from the dangers to which it might be exposed from unnecessarily attacking any prejudices, scruples, or susceptibilities. ["Hear, hear!"] My Lords, the Bill which is now before you has been introduced in fulfilment of that pledge. [*Cheers.*] The Bill, whatever criticism it may be exposed to, I think it will be admitted, redeems, and does not do more than redeem, the pledge which was given. [*Cheers.*] It deals with Voluntary Schools only; and it does not profess to be anything in the nature of a complete reform of the educational system. It would be idle for the Government, which was responsible for the much wider proposals of last year, to maintain that this Bill does all that in our opinion might be done, or ought to be done, for the reform of education; but it does deal with one, perhaps the most urgent, portion of the educational system—that of the relief which is necessary, if not to maintain in existence and prevent the extinction of Voluntary Schools, at all events to maintain their efficiency, without which neither Voluntary nor any other schools can usefully exist. ["Hear, hear!"] It deals with that portion of the question which is necessary to maintain the efficiency, if not the existence, of these schools, which are at present educating more than half the children of our population. ["Hear, hear!"] The case for the relief of Voluntary Schools is one which is not very easy to prove by reference to any general educational statistics. Educational statistics show that in the 20 years which have elapsed between 1875, when the Act had begun to come into full operation, and 1895 the cost of maintenance in Board Schools had increased by about, I think, 13s., while in Voluntary Schools it had increased by about 7s. The excess of cost of maintenance in Board Schools over that in Voluntary Schools had also increased from 5s. in 1875 to something a little over 11s. in 1895. Now if the expenditure by School Boards has not been and is not, as is contended by their friends, an absolutely extravagant one, these figures show at least that, after making all allowance that ought to be made, and which can be made for better economy in voluntary over public administration, the difference between the cost of that education which is considered necessary in Board Schools and the cost which alone can be provided by Voluntary Schools, is greater than is possibly compatible with the full efficiency of Voluntary Schools, and the case that may thus be stated in general terms from general statistics is a great deal stronger if we take the case of schools in our large towns—in Liverpool, in Manchester, Leeds, and especially in London. The difference between the cost of maintenance in Board and Voluntary Schools rises from 12s. to 13s. to 19s. in London, and it is clear that in such a state of things, unless subscriptions are raised to a point which was not considered necessary in 1870, and which I do not think can be reasonably expected now, either these schools must cease to exist or must remain in a state of comparative inefficiency, or else some additional assistance must be given to them from public funds in some manner or other. ["Hear, hear!"] But, my Lords, it is unnecessary, in my opinion, for us in considering this Measure, to bestow labour on the case for Voluntary Schools. It has been fully admitted even by our opponents, fully admitted in the House of Commons' Debates last year, when we were assured over and over again that if we had confined ourselves to a simple Measure providing the necessary relief for Voluntary Schools we should not have encountered the opposition we did encounter. ["Hear, hear!"] Although the Opposition have found ample grounds for opposing what, in our opinion, is a very short and simple measure of relief to Voluntary Schools in the present Session, they still assure us that if our Measure had satisfied certain conditions of equity and equality, if it had been accompanied by certain safeguards for providing that relief should go to increased efficiency of education, and that the rights of parents of children should be respected—that in that case our Measure would have received no opposition from them. Therefore, I may take it that not only on this, but on the other side of the House it is universally admitted that under certain conditions some relief for Voluntary Schools is required at the present time. On the failure of the Bill of last Session the Education Department immediately took into consideration how this relief, which we consider indispensable, could be given, in what manner it ought to be given, and whether it could be given by some Measure both to Voluntary and Board Schools. We spent a great deal of time in the examination of a plan which I will only state without entering into any discussion of it. The plan we considered was whether it would be possible to approach this question from the point of view taken in the Act of 1870, in the 97th section of that Act, by which the amount of special aid which is given to certain necessitous Board Schools is determined in proportion to the rateable value of the district combined with the number of children who have to be educated in the Board School. We considered whether it would be possible to extend that principle to Board and Voluntary Schools alike, whether by some increase of the limits laid down in that clause and by making the principle of universal application, we could deal in the same manner and on the same principle both with Voluntary Schools and necessitous Board Schools. When that proposal was exposed to full examination insuperable difficulties were found to exist, and it was found that so many additions to and modifications of the principle would have been required that the Measure would have been of a far too complicated character to offer any chance of being easily accepted by either House of Parliament. It was carefully examined by a small Departmental Committee, and in the conclusion of their discussion of it they stated that they did not regret that the plan had been proposed as a basis for a Measure, they did not regret that the attempt had been made, because the principle upon which the proposal was made appeared so reasonable and plausible that it was useful that it should have been fully examined to show why it was not applicable to the case now before us. I only refer to the scheme in order to show that we have endeavoured to approach the question not in the interest of Voluntary Schools alone, but in a spirit of perfect equality and fairness to ratepayers and to Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The discussions that took place during the whole of last autumn and winter with which your Lordships are familiar, will have convinced you that almost insuperable objections would have attended a proposal for assisting Voluntary Schools by aid from the rates even if the Government had been willing to adopt that principle. The experience we obtained in the discussion of the Bill last year proved that great difficulty would be involved in the attempt to create any new authority charged with the distribution of the grant, and even if possible, would have involved delay in the provision of relief to Voluntary Schools. In the opinion of all the inspectors whom we consulted, in the opinion, I think, of the best educational authorities, anything in the nature of a grant equally distributed all round to Voluntary Schools would have been found in a great number of cases to have been insufficient, and in other cases would have involved a waste of public money. After examination of all these proposals it appeared that the only alternative that was left was that we have adopted, of asking Parliament to provide a certain sum as a grant in aid to Voluntary Schools, and to intrust the Department itself with the distribution of that sum, having regard to the necessities of each school and to the resources at its disposal. This is the principle contained in the first clause of the Bill. It is embodied in a clause which I think is as short and as simple as it is possible to conceive, and it is subject of wonder and almost of admiration how any Parliamentary ingenuity can have succeeded in prolonging discussion of the principle embodied in this clause in Debate on the Second Reading of the Bill for several days and in Committee for several weeks. ["Hear!"] It does indeed contain one important detail—that is, the recognition of the association of managers of Voluntary Schools, but that is not the principle of the clause; the principle of the clause is embodied in the first and second sub-sections, which enact in the first place that a certain sum shall be annually provided by Parliament for an aid grant, and in the second subsection that the aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department in such manner and amount as the Department think best, for the purposes of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency, due regard being had to the mantenance of voluntary subscriptions. This is the substantial portion of the clause. All the other sub-sections which follow it are merely supplementary and subsidiary to that substantial provision, which provides a sum of money to be distributed on the responsibility of the Department, and on the responsibility of the Department alone, for the relief of the necessities of Voluntary Schools. Exception has been taken to the amount of 5s. which is named in the first Sub-section. The naming of that sum has been described as misleading, because it appears to indicate that the sum of 5s. per scholar is to be distributed indiscriminately to Voluntary Schools, whereas that is not the intention. That is perfectly true, and if this grant in aid had been intended to be a temporary one—if it were asked for one, or for two, or for three years, all reference to 5s. per scholar in the clause would have been omitted. It would have been sufficient to have named in the Bill a certain sum to be placed at the disposal of the Department. But the sum of 5s. per scholar has been inserted in the Bill as showing the limit which it is intended the grant shall never exceed, and, at the same time, indicating the amount which it is hoped and intended that Parliament should annually provide and place at the disposal of the Department. The remaining sub-sections of the clause indicate only the manner in which the Department proposes to exercise the power intrusted to it and discharge the responsibility committed to it. No doubt Her Majesty's inspectors of schools have a very full and competent knowledge of the necessities of the schools within their districts. They have also a large knowledge, perhaps less complete, of the resources of the districts in which these schools are situate. But if our inspectors had possessed all the knowledge which would have been necessary to enable them to distribute, under the Department, this grant, still we were of opinion that to intrust the distribution of the grant to them would have been to place upon them a great responsibility, to impose upon them an invidious duty which might, to some extent, have interfered with the efficient and proper discharge of the other important duties of administration and advice, and of disposing of the ordinary grant which are already imposed upon them. We have, therefore, proposed to seek the assistance and advice of bodies which shall be representative of the managers of the schools themselves. We believe that the interest which they have in education and in the maintenance of the efficiency of education; we believe that the knowledge which they possess of the circumstances of the schools in various localities, and the knowledge which they possess, or which it is competent for them to obtain, of the resources of those localities, will enable them to give to us most valuable advice and assistance in this matter. Some attempts have been made to show that the administration of this grant, with the advice and assistance of these associations, will be nothing but an unseemly scramble amongst clerical managers for the largest share of this grant-in-aid which they can obtain. I think that something in the nature of an unseemly scramble might possibly occur if it were proposed that the managers should come individually before an inspector or other official of the Government in order to obtain the largest share which he could of the grant which is to be disposed of. But while we have not attempted to prescribe the organisation or to define the constitution of the governing bodies of these associations; while there will probably be a great diversity among them both as to area and organisation; while they may include, some of them, all the schools in the county or other recognised area; or whether they may include all the schools in an ecclesiastical district belonging to one denomination; whether their governing bodies are chiefly composed of clerical or lay managers; whether they provide any representation of the teachers or of the parents—however much they may vary in their constitution and in their composition, we believe that the main interest which can actuate any such body, however it be composed, will be the interest of the efficiency of the schools which they represent. [*Cheers.*] And we believe that the importunate claim either of inefficiency or parsimony, or of any other character, will find but a very scant hearing at the hands of such a body. If it be assumed that these associations will be mainly of a clerical character, if it be assumed that they will chiefly be composed of managers who will have denominational rather than educational interests at heart, even then, I cannot conceive what advantage they can hope to gain from the attempt to administer this grant in any narrow, sectarian, or local spirit. ["Hear, hear!"] The Department are of opinion, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion, that the formation and the encouragement of these associations will possess other considerable advantages in addition to that of assisting us in the distribution of this grant. Some of these associations already exist, and have been found to work extremely well. Recognised as they now will be by the Legislature, armed with the influence of exercising a considerable authority over the distribution of a large grant, their power of usefulness will be greatly extended and increased, and they will become capable of better work and a more extended influence. In the opinion of some of our most capable educational advisers, an organisation of this character in the management of Voluntary Schools has long been desirable. In the opinion of these advisers—perhaps I may give some offence by stating it—want of funds has not been the only, perhaps not the main, difficulty with which Voluntary Schools have had to contend, but the difficulties which have arisen from bad and inefficient management have been of at least equal importance. While this Bill will not confer upon these associations, if they should come into existence, any powers except that of giving advice to the Department, while there is no intention of conferring upon them further statutory powers, I think there is little doubt that, if established with these powers of advice, they will very shortly acquire a certain moral power which will enable them to exercise a large influence over the schools in their associations, and to impose a considerable check upon inefficient management, and, by the pressure of well-informed experience, that it will be in their power to improve the management of many schools which may in times past have suffered either from ignorance or administrative incapacity or possibly from religious intolerance, which may in some cases have prevailed amongst individual managers and have injured the efficiency of the schools. I hope in these observations that I have been able to point to some of the reasons why the provisions of this Bill have assumed so wide and general a shape, why we have not thought it necessary to insert in the Bill detailed instructions for the administration and formation of these associations, and why we have declined to accept amendments and minute instructions to the Department in the administration of this grant. We have made the provisions of this Bill wide and general, and we have declined to accept detailed amendments, deliberately and of set purpose, as being inconsistent with the principle of the Bill itself. We do not desire to ignore or to minimise the responsibility which this Bill places upon the Department. The Education Department is primarily charged with watching over and maintaining the efficiency of elementary education, whether in Voluntary or in Board Schools, and we think it would be idle to prescribe to the Department charged with that great duty instructions as to the special purposes which may conduce to that efficiency. We have declined, in dealing with the associations which we propose to encourage, to stereotype the conditions under which they are to come into existence or in which they are to conduct their operations. We attach the highest value to the principle of association of the managers of schools, but we acknowledge that it is as yet an almost untried principle and that the best form which it can assume can probably only be determined by experience. We are of opinion that the power which we retain of approving or disapproving of the constitution of the governing bodies of these associations will be a better guarantee than could be provided by any detailed instructions inserted in the body of the Bill that these associations will be formed in a manner which will be most conducive to the proper conduct of their duties. In the conduct of this Bill we have had further to bear in mind that so long as the Act of 1870 remains in existence, that Act, which is at present our educational charter, the Government is charged with yet another duty besides that of maintaining the efficiency of elementary schools; it is charged with the duty of maintaining the existence of schools which afford religious instruction to the children of our people. ["Hear, hear!"]

The defects of the Act of 1870 have been fully and freely admitted. I do not propose to enter into a discussion of those defects and inequalities at this time, but so long as the Act exists we must recognise that under it an absolutely uniform standard of education in every part of the country is impossible, that the standard must vary according to the circumstances of the locality—so long as education remains to any extent a charge, whether on the rates, on voluntary subscriptions, or on contributions from the parents by means of school fees, the standard of elementary education must vary according to the circumstances of the locality, and for this reason we have declined to accept amendments which would have imposed upon the Education Department a rigid rule that this grant shall never be applied to a reduction of subscriptions where, in the opinion of the Department, the resources of a locality or of a certain portion of the people are so small that it is not in their power to make more than a very limited contribution to the support of those schools in which religious instruction is such as they desire for their children. In such cases we recognise that so long as a certain standard of efficiency is maintained, without which the school would not be recognised at all, it may be our duty to administer this grant in aid rather for the relief of the subscribers and the parents than for the purpose of forcing up the standard of education in that locality to that which we may reasonably expect in more prosperous communities. The Department has recognised the two responsibilities which are placed upon it by the Act of 1870 and by the present Measure. They recognise that they are responsible, in the first place, to apply the Parliamentary grant and this grant in addition for the purpose of maintaining and improving elementary education, and next that they have an equal responsibility to discharge in giving effect to the desire of a large number of the people, a desire to which Parliamentary sanction has been given, that schools in which religious instruction is given shall be preserved. [*Cheers.*] Having regard to this double responsibility we have felt ourselves bound to resist Amendments which would, in our opinion, have hampered and fettered us in the discharge of the duties which have been imposed upon us. It is said that this Bill does nothing for necessitous Board Schools. That is a defect which I trust will be remedied in a very few days. We are aware that there are many Board Schools which stand in almost, if not quite, as much need of assistance as Voluntary Schools themselves, and a Measure for their relief will, I believe, be introduced into the other House of Parliament, and I trust carried, within a very short time. I do not profess to say that the relief which that Measure will offer to certain Board Schools will be on the same scale as that which is proposed for Voluntary Schools in this Bill, or that it will be equally extended to all School Boards. If it is desired to raise the question of statutory equality which is supposed to be enacted under the Act of 1870, I shall be perfectly ready, if necessary, to enter into that argument, but I do not think it is necessary for my purpose at the present moment. We maintain that no principle of statutory equality enacted by the Act of 1870 is infringed by this Bill, but we further contend that no such case exists for the extension of a grant in aid to all Board Schools, as has been proved to exist for a grant in aid to all Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The larger number of School Boards, in our opinion, stand in no need of relief or, if they do, the relief is to a very large extent in the hands of those by whom the School Boards are elected. The case of the Board Schools rests upon a totally different foundation from that of the Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The cases in which relief to necessitous Board Schools is an educational question are, we believe, extremely rare; in the majority of cases the question of relief to School Boards is rather a question of relief of certain ratepayers than a question of educational efficiency. ["Hear, hear!"] It is a question which we believe requires the consideration of Parliament, and which we propose at the earliest possible moment to bring under the consideration of Parliament, but we altogether deny that there is any similarity in the case of Voluntary Schools, and of the poorest Board Schools which would have made it incumbent upon us to attempt to deal with them in a single Measure. If it is said that this Bill does nothing for the ratepayers who are charged in some districts with a large part of the cost of education, that also is a proposition which I entirely deny. This Bill does a great deal for the ratepayers if it does not do it directly. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not believe it is disputed that the total disappearance of all Voluntary Schools would involve a charge upon the ratepayers of not less than four millions sterling per annum. If, therefore, the extinction of such schools is prevented by this Bill the saving to the ratepayers in general may be measured by that amount. Another point upon which I wish to make one or two observations is the alleged inequality in the distribution of the grant between different districts in the country. It is said that the districts where Voluntary Schools educate the greater proportion of the children will receive much, but those where the education of the children is simply conducted in Board Schools will receive little. That inequality in the distribution of this sum must no doubt be admitted, but we altogether deny that there is any injustice in this proposal, or that,whether it be inequality or whether it be injustice, it is inequality or injustice which is not inherent in the settlement of 1870, which even our opponents profess to desire to retain. The Act of 1870 recognised the existence of denominational and of undenominational schools, and it recognised the existence of the undenominational schools merely as a necessary supplement to the denominational schools already in existence. ["Hear, hear!"] As introduced the Act of 1870 would have sanctioned the application of a rate for the maintenance of denominational schools; as it was passed it withheld that aid. In substitution for the rate aid which the Bill offered on its introduction, provision was made by the State which it was supposed at the time would be adequate compensation for the withholding of rate aid. That compensation has not proved to be adequate. I do not believe that Parliament is prepared either to face the alternative of sacrificing the denominational schools, which, in my opinion, are approved and appreciated by a large majority of the parents in the country; neither are we prepared to invite Parliament to face all the controversy that would be involved in the proposal to support these schools from the rates. The inequality to which I have referred, and which is complained of, rests upon and is the result of an inequality which is of a still more fundamental character —an inequality which denies to one class of schools that form of assistance which it concedes to another class. In wisely and prudently seeking to remove that inequality it seems to me that there is no right to complain of the minor inequality which is involved in the somewhat unequal distribution of the special aid grant. I do not think that at this stage of the discussion of this Measure it is necessary that I should detain your Lordships by further explanation, either of the provisions of the Bill or the principles on which it is founded. I have endeavoured to point out in what sense the Government have understood the responsibilities which they propose to undertake in the distribution of this grant, and I do not think it is necessary that I should enter into further defence of the reasons which have induced them to decline the Amendments which have been so freely proffered by the Opposition in the other House. I thank your Lordships very much for the patience and attention with which you have heard my statement. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill. [*Cheers.*]

Earl SPENCER: I must congratulate your Lordships' House on the fact that the responsible head of the Education Department has introduced this important Measure to your attention. The Bill that we have before us is a very remarkable document. It represents what I may call the self-styled council of perfection. Why do I say that? Because this Bill, in a perfectly unprecedented manner, has come up to this House without a line or a word being altered from the way in which it was framed when it was introduced in another place. I cannot for a moment think that this is a recommendation of the Measure. I think it is impossible, however wise, however experienced, the framers of the Measure may be, that thy should not be able to learn from an Opposition which cannot be accused of want of experience or stupidity some Amendment of the Measure. That is why I have so termed the Bill. The noble Duke has referred to the Bill as a very small Bill. No doubt it is a short Bill, for I venture to say that the first clause alone contains as much material as would in an ordinary Bill fill six or seven clauses. Before I go to the general discussion of the matter I would like to make some passing remarks on education. Our system of education in this country is very peculiar. There are the Voluntary Schools, which are denominational in their character, and which are supported by State grants and subscriptions, and there are the Board Schools, which are undenominational in their character, and are supported by State grants and the rates. Let us see how these two systems stand in the country. They exist side by side. There are in the Voluntary Schools 2,445,812 children, and in the Board Schools 1,879,200; and the total annual grant amounts to £6,232,750 for all elementary schools in the country. In the Board Schools the annual grant or fee grant amounts to £2,975,898, and for the Voluntary Schools £3,256,352. The annual subscriptions to the Voluntary Schools amount to £836,428—that is to say, the subscriptions for maintenance amount to about one-fourth of what the public grants may be. That is an important matter with regard to what I am now going to say. These Voluntary Schools are managed by denominational managers. That of itself is a very remarkable fact—that such an enormous sum as that which I have quoted is being paid towards the maintenance of Voluntary Schools, and that that should be intrusted to these managers. I think you can hardly find a parallel for that in any other country. In 1876 the noble Duke said:—

> "I am not surprised that my hon. Friend is dissatisfied with the present system. I must confess it is a remarkable and, I believe, an anomalous system. It is a system which places in the hands of religious bodies and private individuals duties and powers which in every other country in the world are considered as appertaining to the State and should be exercised by it. It is a system which has undoubtedly worked very much to the advantage of one denomination and to the detriment of others."

This expresses my meaning better than any words of mine. I will come to the question of the increased cost of education. In 1873, in Voluntary Schools it was £1 10s. per scholar, and in 1895 it was £1 19s. In Board Schools the cost in the same years was respectively £1 14s. 6d. and £2 10s. 2d. I think these figures show that there is a strong necessity for giving additional assistance to the schools in the country from the State. ["Hear, hear!"] I come now to the Bill itself. It proposes to do that, but it proposes to give increased grants to Voluntary Schools alone. I will venture to offer to your Lordships some arguments to show why we feel it to be our duty on this side of the House to protest by our votes against the Second Reading of the Bill. We do not for a moment wish to destroy or starve Voluntary Schools. We consider them part of the settlement of 1870, and that it would be extravagant to supplement them by School Boards. We feel it would not be desired by a large number of the people; but what we do object to is that we have no certain guarantees, which we ought to have. One of these is as to the introduction in the management of some representative from the locality. Though there may have been some irregularity before, it is enormously increased by this Bill. The managers are often clergymen. I should be the last to attack the clergy; on the contrary, I wish to give my meed of praise to the work they have done in regard to education. I know cases where the clergy have so conducted their schools that Nonconformists readily send their children there, and make no objection to the management; but there are very great exceptions to that. ["Hear, hear!"] Managers in certain schools often impose conditions on their teachers and on the education given that are not in conformity with religious equality. [*Cheers.*] A master is appointed on condition that he will do some extra work, either play the organ or teach in the Sunday school. That at once limits the field from which teachers can be recruited, and then there is a grievance to which I attach importance indeed. There are 8,000 parishes in which there is only one school, and that is almost universally the Church school. There might be many bright and clever children belonging to Nonconformist parents well fitted for the profession of teacher. How are these children to enter the profession? ["Hear, hear!"] I know one exception where, in a school managed by a clergyman, a Nonconformist child has become a teacher. In hardly any schools is this permitted, and therefore this noble profession is entirely closed to these able and clever

Nonconformist children. I feel that that is a very great grievance. ["Hear, hear!"] The introduction of representation on boards of management might not do a great deal to check it, but I think it will do something, and for that and other reasons I desire that some representation should be introduced as a guarantee for the proper management of the schools before this grant is made. ["Hear, hear!"] I cannot understand why the clergy object to lay management. I know a good many instances in which it has been introduced without the least difficulty, and in which the clergy have worked admirably with laymen, but it appears that to introduce a condition of this sort to regulate those of the clergy who are narrow-minded is repugnant to the Church and those in authority. It seems to me that the clergy have at starting such an enormous advantage in their own education and in their experience in teaching that they will always hold their own and lead the school committee even if there are laymen upon it. ["Hear, hear!"] This point of the management of schools is one which we feel is of great importance, and we shall be extremely glad to see some change made in the Bill with regard to it. I now come to another point—namely, the inequality of treatment under the Bill. The noble Duke referred to it as the inherent result of the Act of 1870. I maintain that there is very great inequality, not only as between Voluntary Schools and Board Schools, but as between one part of the country and another. ["Hear, hear!"] I doubt extremely whether the argument brought forward by the noble Duke as to the addition to the rates there would be if the Voluntary Schools disappeared is an argument which will come home to those who suffer from heavy rates. They will not believe that Voluntary Schools are going to be done away with. If there is anything in what is said by those who urge the establishment of denominational schools, I cannot suppose they will drop their schools in the manner that is suggested. ["Hear, hear!"] In a speech which the noble Duke made in November 1895, in reply to a deputation, he said:—

> "I presume that what is intended by this is an increased fixed grant all round. I do not conceive it is proposed by any legislation to depart from the principle of statutory equality as regards State aid to Voluntary and Board Schools."

I am aware that the noble Duke has made some explanation of this passage, and has put a different interpretation upon it; but I could not follow his explanation, and I confess that when I read that speech of his I thought he was alluding to the grant authorised by Parliament to be made by the Department to both Board and Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] If you look at this a little closer, you will see that a very grave injustice would be done by the Bill as it now stands. Under this Bill £611,701 will come to Voluntary Schools in England and Wales from the 5s. grant. If the Board Schools received the same grant—

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: They will not.

EARL SPENCER: If they did receive the same grant they would get £466,878. We are told that Board and Voluntary Schools are on a totally different footing. They are so, no doubt, in many respects; but if you have to regard the subscribers to Voluntary Schools who suffer from what is called an intolerable strain, surely for exactly the same reason you ought to have regard to the intolerable strain on heavily-rated localities. ["Hear, hear!"] Let us just look for a moment at the localities. London and Lancashire have about the same number of Board and Voluntary School children together. If you give 5s. all round, Lancashire will get £114,000 and London will only get £44,000, though it is rated twice as much as Lancashire. It is, in my opinion, exceedingly difficult to say anything but that that is an extremely unjust and unfair arrangement. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not propose to go into other questions at length. There is the question of the efficiency of the education, there is the question of maintaining voluntary subscriptions. Those are very important matters, but they are referred to in so vague a manner in the Bill that I doubt whether we shall have any security that the increased grant will be applied to increase efficiency, or that the voluntary subscriptions will be maintained. I should deeply regret to see the total loss of voluntary subscriptions, and I think those who defend the Bill would regret it also. ["Hear, hear!"] I come now to a very important point—namely, the question of these associations of management. The noble Duke himself has laid great stress on the importance of this provision, and in another place the First Lord of the Treasury said he considered this almost, if not quite, the most important clause in the Bill. From Mr. Balfour's speech we may, I think, argue with certainty that the formation of these associations must be considered compulsory. This is what he said:—

> "I believe, therefore, as I said the other day, that the association part of the Bill, however much it may be attacked, is a part of the scheme from which I hope almost more than from any other part of it; and I trust that those who have to vote on the different stages of the Bill will look to this part of the Bill with special care and impartiality, and I am convinced they will think that the Government have come to a wise conclusion in this matter and that we ought to do everything we can where there is no party involved to force schools into association, from which operation so much is to be hoped in the cause of both secular and religious education throughout the country."

To this I could add words of the Vice President of the Council which prove that it is the intention of the Government that the Department should make these clauses compulsory. I think that is a very great and serious objection to the proposal. ["Hear, hear!"] You are creating a new local authority. It may be called Voluntary, but it is a new authority; and you are increasing that chaos of local authorities of which we have heard so much. What is the area over which the authority is to exist? I see in one speech it is stated at a million of population. In another it is to be diocesan; and other suggestions have been made. I notice that the National Society, forestalling the decision of your Lordships' House, have already come to a resolution on the matter, and they wish to have certain laymen on these boards. I venture to think that these associations, particularly when connected with a particular sect, will have a very bad influence on the country. We may probably have Wesleyan associations, and other Nonconformist associations, and, no doubt, Church associations. I should like to say a few words only on the last. I should regret exceedingly to see diocesan boards of this kind formed. I have the greatest possible respect for individual prelates of the Church, but I do look with some suspicion and alarm at the increase given to the power of the higher clergy in matters not religious. ["Hear, hear!"] I believe the people are warmly attached to the religion of the country, but they share the views I have expressed with regard to clerical management. I should greatly fear these diocesan boards would give very much increased power to the higher officers of the Church. They will damage what is one of the great advantages in our Church—the independence or proportionate independence which our clergy have in various matters. This diocesan management will bring our Church more in the relation of other Churches who hardly allow their clergy to have any individual independence whatever. That, I conceive, to be a grave objection. But I will add other difficulties which I see. The pooling of the money to be given by the grant will cause endless friction and difficulty. How is this money to be settled? There will be perpetual friction as to what school is to get a large and which a small subscription and which no subscription at all. Some time ago, in my own neighbourhood, an idea arose of having voluntary associations, and there was the greatest possible jealousy on the part of many schools or managers I know of this proposal. What they felt was, that efficient schools would probably have to pay for weak and inefficient schools, and they had the greatest possible dislike to this idea. I have noticed, among many statements on the subject, a clear statement by a Churchman, who is by no means unfavourable altogether to the Bill—I mean Archdeacon Wilson, Vicar of Rochdale, who, in the *Guardian* on 11 November 1896, wrote:—

> "I ask you, Is that (the distribution of grants) to be done by a voluntary body like a diocesan board of education? We shall need something almost the equivalent of a School Board to investigate the needs of all the different schools, to look into the question of the extravagance of or the economy of them, to determine what share of the contributions ought to be given in one of the hundred parishes that are in that School Board area, and to apportion the claims of some 60 different schools. This is an appalling work, and I ask at whose expense is this to be done? If this is to be done at the expense either of the rates or of the special aid grant, we are establishing another Church School Board, a Church educational department with a few representatives of the ratepayers placed upon it in the hope that they will be deluded into the acceptance of such a position of a Board which will have no real power over the treasurers of the schools or the managers of them."

That states clearly the difficulties which the creation of the associations will cause in different parts of the country. I have a further objection to make, which I make with some diffidence before the President of the Council, who has the latest information at his command. I object to the scheme of the associations on account of the position of Her Majesty's inspectors. The Education Department last year declared that they were so overburdened with work that they must devolve the distribution of the money under the Bill of last year on the shoulders of local bodies. This year the Education Department becomes responsible for the distribution of the money under the advice of the associations to which I have referred. If there is a difficulty, how is the Education Department to work? It will work through the inspectors of schools. They are the eyes and ears of the Department. I believe they will be throwing on the inspectors an entirely new duty. Hitherto they have had to decide on the educational quality of the school, on the sanitary condition of the school, and distribute all grants in accordance with rules. Now they will be concerned in various disputes, such as whether a school is "necessitous" or not. Nothing can be more difficult than to define what a necessitous school is. There will be endless controversy about it. In one part of the Bill it refers to the difference in the grant between town and country. Will not that lead to endless controversies and a great deal of bad blood if you have to decide whether a town or country district is to have a larger rate, or between one village or another? I fear this may have a prejudicial effect upon the inspectors. Hitherto they have been held in the highest possible regard and admiration all over the country. But I fear they may lose some of the just influence they have as guardians of education if they are brought into contact with the many quarrels which I feel certain will arise under the distribution of the grant. My Lords, I am afraid I have detained you longer than I should have done on this Bill. We have no desire to starve or destroy Voluntary Schools. We recognise them as part of the educational system of the country, but we object to increasing their already large endowments from the taxation of this country without obtaining some representation on their managing committees. We object to there being no guarantees for efficient teaching or the maintenance of subscriptions to the Voluntary Schools, and, lastly, we object to the Bill because it assists subscribers to Voluntary Schools without giving any relief to the heavily-rated supporters of Board Schools. [*Cheers.*]

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I was very glad indeed to hear from the noble Duke in his opening speech that he still held fast to the rule which had been followed in the other House and did not intend to encourage Amendments to be made in the Bill, chiefly because—and I think it is of great importance—this Bill should be passed speedily, as time is running on, and the schools are really suffering, and you cannot be too quick in letting them understand that the relief which it is proposed to give them will be given for certain and soon. I do not mean to say that there are not details in the Bill which might possibly be improved. There may be some which both sides would like to improve. Probably, though the Amendments which would be, and perhaps will be, moved on the opposite side of the House will not be quite the same as those which we on this side would like to move; there are various Amendments which possibly the Bishops may like to move, and I do not think Amendments of the same sort will be moved from the other side. I should be glad if the Bill passed just as it is. Although I admit there is a possibility of making improvements, I do not think any improvements can be made which are worth the delay that would be necessary in making them. We have come to a point at which a large number of the Voluntary Schools are really suffering a great deal, and they are in much suspense and anxiety, and although they are much supported by the fact that the Government have introduced this Bill and carried it through the other House of Parliament, yet they cannot help feeling even still that the assurance on which they have to rely is not quite complete, and they are so keen about the matter that they are already earnestly considering if the Bill passes what kind of associations they ought to join in making. In regard to the associations, as president of the National Society I have thought it my duty to encourage that society to put forward a kind of model scheme which the noble Earl who has just sat down has noticed in his speech, and which he seems to think will be making the Bill even more mischievous than it is already. The scheme proposed by the National Society, for the constitution of the associations, is simply this—that, in the first place, the area should be one of considerable size, a diocese, or if a diocese contained more counties than one, a county; and, in the next place, it should be initiated by the Bishop requesting the managers of the Church schools in each division of the diocese, rural deaneries as they are called, to meet together and settle whether they would join any such association or not; then that those who join should be called together to a further meeting, when representatives should be elected for each rural deanery, and those representatives should then meet and form the governing body of the association. It is pressed upon the managers of Voluntary Schools that it would be the right thing to arrange that at least half the representatives should be laymen, because we cannot afford to leave them outside. ["Hear, hear!"] It is to laymen we necessarily look, to a great extent, for voluntary subscriptions. The clergy, in many cases, have largely given out of their own diminishing means—["hear, hear!"]—towards the maintenance of their Church schools. But it is obvious that that cannot be the main support of the schools, and, in fact, if the diminution of the incomes of the clergy were to go further than it has gone that means of support would be seriously lessened, and very likely would, in many places, disappear altogether. We cannot afford to leave out the laymen; and I think you will find when these associations are being formed the position of the laymen will be well assured in all the governing bodies. It is suggested that the chairman of the governing body should be the Bishop or someone appointed by him. I am conscious, of course, that we run quite counter to the ideas expressed by the noble Lord, who does not like Bishops, except as personal friends, and he thinks the country generally does not like them. So far as I can judge I do not think that is the case. I do not think it is at all the case that the country are unwilling that the Bishops should take the leading part in the government of all things with which the Church is concerned, and whatever may be said about the importance of education I do not think you will get out of the heads of Church people that religious education is a very important part of the education of the working classes. [*Cheers.*] Consequently, it is impossible for the Church to stand aside and say, "This is a secular matter, for which we do not really care. It is entirely your business. We, the Church, and we, the Bishops, the officers of the Church, are able to leave it entirely in your hands." The ministers and officers of the Church cannot take that line, and I do not believe an association with a Bishop at its head would be found by any means a bad form of association for the purposes for which such associations as these are proposed in the Bill. You will see from the sketch that I have given of the mode in which the associations will be formed, their truly representative character, the idea being that there shall be a representative in the governing body of every ten schools or every fraction of ten. If there were ten schools there would be one representative; if more than ten, there would be two, until you came to 20, and then there would be three. That is a simple mode of representation, and there cannot be great difficulty in securing that, upon that mode of representation, laymen should be elected upon the body. The governing body so formed would certainly be a very efficient body in judging of the needs of Church schools in the diocese or county with which they had to deal. ["Hear, hear!"] The clergy know each other well enough to know pretty well what is the need of the Church schools in each parish, and the more all these schools are brought together, you may depend upon it, the more will they begin to take an interest in one another's schools and that general interest in the education of the whole area to which the association belongs, which is more likely to improve the efficiency of the schools than almost anything else you can procure. (*Cheers.*] The thing which is wanted everywhere is that the schools shall know each other and shall profit by each other's experience. There are many cases in which the managers of schools do not really manage as well as they might, simply because they know so little about it, and if they are brought into constant contact with other managers of schools, it has the tendency to increase the general knowledge and the general interest in education, and I have no doubt at all that these associations would have that effect. ["Hear, hear!"] There are such associations already at work. There is one, for instance, in my old diocese of Exeter, which has been going on now for some years. It was formed immediately after the passing of the Fee Grant Bill, which contemplated associations. The Bill did not allow us to make such associations as I should have preferred, but still it did give considerable powers to the managers to associate themselves with very good effect. There can be no question that in this particular diocese, where this association has been in existence for some time, it has worked with exceeding smoothness, and there has not been anything at all like the sort of description which the noble Earl has developed out of his own ideas, of scrambling for money, quarrelling with one another, and altogether departing from the purpose of making the schools as efficient as they can be made and from the purpose of dealing justly with the schools as compared with one another. All this fear that there will be a great deal of quarrelling within the association, I am quite confident, has really no basis of reality whatever, and you may be perfectly certain that when the associations are formed there will be a steady increase in the desire to work together, and a steady consequent increase in the efficiency of the education given. [*Cheers.*] I do not deny that there is a certain amount of difficulty involved in the distribution of the money, and I do not deny that now and then there will be those who will grumble a little at not getting as much as they think they ought. But it is the privilege of Englishmen to grumble—[*laughter*]—and they will not, on that account, fail to do their work. ["Hear, hear!"] I have not any doubt at all it will be found that the Church schools would very greatly gain by being formed into such associations, and, in fact, I think that, even independently of having any money to distribute, there would be advantage in the mere fact that they were brought together in this way. But, of course, you could not bring them together to simply advise one another, and the necessity of advising the Department as to the distribution of the money will be the real thing for them to do, and I am quite confident you will not easily get any other machinery so thoroughly efficient for the purpose. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Earl asks the very important question,

Archbishop of Canterbury.

> "Why do the Church people object to having laymen upon the boards of management?"

I think he made a slight mistake there. We have laymen in almost every case where we can get them. [*Cheers.*] There are, no doubt, parishes where the clergyman is the sole manager, because really it has not been possible in some parishes to find laymen who will give either the time or the trouble or know enough about the matter to take part in such management. I may observe that the committees of management, which consist of the clergy alone, were the fruits of the Education Department itself. The Education Department drew up a number of models of the forms of trust which were to be included in the trust deeds of all the schools that received grants from the Government. There was in no case of that kind that I know of a trust deed of that kind established, except when it was really very difficult to establish any other kind of trust deed. It is not that there is any objection on the part of any Church people that there should be laymen on the managing committees. What they object to is, not that, but that there should be men who are not themselves Churchmen, and for this reason—that they have found by experience which cannot be questioned, that the important thing, if you are to give religious instruction in a school, is to see what sort of man is the master who is to be at the head of the imparting of this religious instruction. [*Cheers.*] The managers of the Church schools cannot afford to give up the appointment of the teachers, which is their one guarantee that the religious instruction shall be such in quality as they themselves desire. [*Cheers.*] It had been very often asked, "Why should you not prescribe the religious instruction to be given, and then leave it to the master to give it, without taking any pains to find out whether he himself believes in it or not? He may not believe in what you Churchmen think a fundamental article of faith, but he may teach that article though he does not believe it." Yes, he may; he may get the children to pass a good examination upon all these various points of doctrine; but what is the examination worth if meanwhile it appears that the children have imbibed from him a disbelief in one of the fundamental principles in what he has to teach? [*Cheers.*] There is no question about it that if the teacher does not believe what he is put there to teach it has not the effect upon the children that we desire to produce in the slightest degree. ["Hear, hear!"] When I was at Rugby I had to teach the classical religions, and to teach all that boys ought to know in order to study classical books about Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Mars, and all the other divinities with which in those days we were all familiar. But, my Lords, I should not like the Christian religion to be taught in the same way, because I will answer for it the boys who had instruction in that way from me did not believe that Jupiter, Juno, Mars or Apollo were existent deities at one time, who governed as the writers of classical literature suppose. But if we are to teach in that fashion I would rather leave religious instruction out. ["Hear, hear!"] I say you must secure that the teachers really believe what they have to teach, and if you do not secure that the teachers are thus competent to give instruction in that spirit, the Church managers will earnestly contend for being absolutely free to guarantee to all their subscribers that the teacher is a man who can be trusted, not only to teach boys to pass examinations, but to teach boys what has been revealed in the work of God, and so teaching them that, as far as human agency can secure it, the boys shall believe what they are taught. [*Cheers.*] For that reason we are very jealous indeed about the appointment of teachers, and it is for that reason, and that reason alone, that we stand out against the introduction of those who would not share that opinion with ourselves, into the managing bodies of our schools. ["Hear, hear!"] From this I am quite certain the great body of Voluntary Schools will not depart. I confess I was a little disturbed a while ago by the words used by the Vice President of the Council in a speech he made at Girton, near Cambridge, when he said he hoped these associations would be comprehensive and would not be confined to any one particular sect. Well, I hope just the contrary, and I am quite satisfied that anything which tends to bring Church schools under the immediate management of other than Church people, is a very serious thing indeed. I do not know anything which would more effectually kill the great body of Voluntary Schools than to do what very excellent people—and I am afraid there is a little touch of the feeling in the Vice President himself—are sometimes inclined to do, to try as much as they can to undenominationalise these Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] If you were to undenominationalise Voluntary Schools it is quite certain they would very soon perish, and for this simple reason, that the subscribers would immediately say, after you had got rid of all denominational peculiarities and particularities, "Why don't you have a Board and have a Board School? That is fair all round, and everybody will then pay; whereas at present there is this injustice that we, the subscribers, have to pay rates to keep up Board Schools, and we have to pay our subscriptions in addition to those rates to keep up our own Voluntary Schools." It is sometimes ludicrous to hear the way in which ratepayers are contrasted with subscribers. The noble Earl just now spoke of the poor ratepayer and the necessities of poor Board Schools. But if ratepayers deserve assistance surely Voluntary School subscribers deserve it, for they all pay rates, including the rates imposed for educational purposes. ["Hear, hear!"] It is an argument, I think, that will not hold water that the ratepayers more need assistance than Voluntary Schools. There is much said sometimes about statutory equality on this subject, and I confess I find a difficulty in understanding the meaning of the phrase so used. Naturally, one would say statutory equality means equality of position and finance under statute. But can it be said that there is this statutory equality under statute in the position of Board and Voluntary Schools? Voluntary Schools are supported by subscriptions—no statute requires these subscriptions. Board Schools are supported by public funds, and a statute compels the payment of rates for the purpose. There is nothing in the nature of financial equality in this. There was in the Bill of 1870 an attempt made to produce something like equality. It was proposed that an extra grant should be made to Voluntary Schools to put them on a level with Board Schools, but as the Bill passed the House of Commons the clause was so altered that whatever grant was made to Voluntary Schools the same grant was to be made to Board Schools, so that equality disappeared with a few strokes of the pen. There is not, and never has been, any equality of Voluntary Schools with Board Schools in their financial position under statute. The noble Earl made other objections to the Bill on principle, and I do not know whether there may not be some truth in some of the things he has said in application to this matter. I am not prepared to say, for instance, that it would be a very evil thing if on the managing body of schools there were representatives of parents. I should object very strongly to representatives of ratepayers, because we get no money from the rates; but I should not object to representation of parents, but I should object to bringing that about by a clause in an Act of Parliament at this stage. Whenever we get beyond this stage, and I hope we shall not stop at this stage—[" hear, hear!"]—when we get beyond this stage there will be many things to consider. As time goes on we shall want very considerable changes in our system of education, but at present we are feeling our way, and the first thing we have to face is the fact that Voluntary Schools are in serious danger, and we have to meet the danger with a measure of relief. Of course this does not exhaust the subject, and there is a great deal more to be said, but we must feel our way. I wish myself the Government had given 6s. instead of 5s., but they have gone as far as in their judgment they can; they are trying to see with how little they can do what has to be done, and they are right in those endeavours. They should try to avoid the spending of public money more than is necessary. I look upon this as a step in the right direction, but I trust that if we wait a little longer we shall have a great deal more to say. But I cannot help expressing my exceeding great regret that there should be any delay at all in providing the beginning of a real system of secondary education. I am convinced that elementary education is suffering from the fact of the intrusion of secondary education into its province. There are a great many instances in which masters who are dealing with elementary education would deal with these subjects a great deal better in different sets of schools. A great many of them are quite capable of the position of masters in secondary schools, and if we had a good system of secondary education it would be the natural ambition of an elementary schoolmaster to raise himself to the higher sphere. But at present we have schools very seriously injured by the attempts to teach children what they are not yet in a position to learn; and the cost of masters is enormously increased to enable them to teach what nobody who really knows can call worth the money. The fact is you cannot go any further with what are called specific and class subjects without some preparation of the children. Sometimes it is said we do not teach so much here as is taught in Germany, and the answer to that is, our system is not so old as the German system, which has been at work for a considerable time. At present our children are much better educated than their parents, and the next generation will show a further advance, and I have no doubt the time will come when experts will admit that our masters teach and our children learn quite as much as is taught and learned under the foreign system. But now I am quite certain that a large proportion of the labour spent in teaching our children advanced subjects is really wasted, because our children have not had the mental preparation for taking in the instruction. My Lords, I hope the Bill will be passed exactly as it is and as rapidly as possible. [*Cheers.*]

THE DUKE of ARGYLL: I am not only a supporter of this Bill, but one of those who, in spite of its limited character, rejoice more than I can say that it has at last reached the safe haven of your Lordships' House. This Bill means a great deal more than those departmental questions which have been referred to. Earl Spencer has been answered with an authority to which I cannot pretend, and my most reverend Friend has blown to pieces the detailed objections of the noble Earl. I pass from these and look at the Bill from the great principle it is intended to affirm. I must confess that—although of course with the great majority of the people of this country I have followed with more or less attention the detailed, prolonged, and, I am afraid I must say, the tedious discussions the Bill has undergone—I did not until a few days ago read the text of the Bill. When I read this short and simple Bill I confess I wondered how it could be that a Party professing to represent Liberal principles could find any ground of opposition. It is one of the most liberal Bills, with a liberality approaching almost to license, that has ever come before your Lordships' House. We hear that never has there been such a flutter as this Bill has caused in the Radical dovecot, how it has been inveighed against as an endowment of the Church of England, and raged at as a Bill to support sectarian education. Now, my Lords, it is a curious thing that from the beginning to the end of the Bill, except in one sub-section where it might fairly be left out, there is not a single word referring to the Church, or religion, or religious teaching, or anything sectarian. The Bill is for the support of Voluntary Schools, and those Voluntary Schools may be purely secular. There is nothing whatever to prevent the Department giving a grant, for instance, to a school supported by agnostics. If any of those gentlemen, who refuse to think that on the greatest subject of human thought there is anything to be known and anything to be believed, got up a school of their own—and why should they not?—that would be a Voluntary School, and it would be absolutely entitled, I take it, under this Bill to be supported by the State. There is absolutely nothing sectarian in that. The expression "Voluntary School," according to the definition in the Bill, means "a public elementary school not provided by a School Board." It must not be a school supported by the rates, but it may be a Voluntary School in connection with any other body, religious or non-religious. That is the principle of the Bill, and to accuse the Bill of being sectarian in its principle is a gross misrepresentation of its purport. It is a curious thing to my mind that the principle of the Bill is not expressly stated in any words within it. The principle of the Bill, as I understand it, is this—"We, the State, have made ourselves responsible for the secular education of the whole of the people, and we will give money in support of all those who produce a well-educated child in secular knowledge, whether it is connected with religious bodies or not." That is not only liberal, it is absolutely indiscriminate. I can conceive many men who support religious education denouncing—and I am quite sure a few years ago it would have been denounced—upon this ground alone. The noble Earl opposite talked about inequality. There is no inequality whatever in the Bill. There is absolute equality as regards the principle on which the grant is given. This Bill is mainly opposed—do not let us mistake it—by those who dislike religious education—["hear, hear!"]—and by religious education I mean education in connection with some definite school of religious teaching. There is no doubt about it. The Nonconformists have taken a violent part against this Bill, but the principle of the Bill is the principle which they are constantly enumerating—that the State ought to have no concern with religious education. But then if we push them we find their meaning of that is this—the State is to have nothing to do with religious education except to denounce it, or to boycott it, or to subject it to fine or penalty. They would propose that if a school comes up before those who are to give the grant and says, "Here we present you a number of children admirably taught in secular education," then the State should say, "Ah, yes, but are you also taught religion?" "Oh, yes," is the reply, "we are taught religion in our school." "Then go away; we have nothing more to do with you." ["Hear, hear!"] They wish to destroy religious education, and they wish public money not to be given to secular education, even when it is produced by those who are interested in religious education. My noble Friend Lord Herschell shakes his head. I do not say they put it in that way, but that is the result of their argument. They do not wish the public money to be given to schools which are connected with churches. How has it come about that Voluntary Schools are always considered and talked about, and in this Debate to-night have always been spoken of, as denominational schools? They might be not all denominational. The noble Earl opposite said he objected to these schools, at least so far as he did object to them, chiefly because they were denominational. How has that come about? It is because of this—that the various schools of the Christian Church are in this country the only public bodies that will submit to the self-sacrifice of giving large sums of money out of their private pocket, besides their rates, for the purposes of education. More than one-half of the whole children of the United Kingdom are educated in denominational schools. That shows, so far as we go at present at least, that the parentage of the country is in favour of teaching religious along with secular education. ["Hear, hear!"] I entirely agree with the Archbishop of Canterbury that the only security you have for religious instruction is that the school shall be denominational—that is, established in connection with definite systems of religious instruction. I remember my noble Friend Lord Spencer some years ago making a speech in this House, in which he said that he was all in favour of religious education, but not in favour of the teaching of dogma. I do not think I followed my noble Friend on that occasion—

Earl SPENCER: The noble Duke did, and I remember that he said I was talking thorough nonsense. [*Laughter.*]

The Duke of ARGYLL: Oh, well, that is very much my opinion now—[*laughter*]—but I will give my noble Friend my reason for it. I should very much like him to rise in this House and define to us religion which is without dogma. Remember that there is a God, that there has been a Christ, and that there will be a future state. These are the primary truths of religion, and are they not all dogmas? Are they not contested by large sections of those who are nominally Christians? Undoubtedly they are, and unless you have a system of religious teaching which is connected with organised Churches—that is to say, organised bodies of men who hold particular views of Christianity and particular dogmas—I maintain with the Archbishop of Canterbury that you have no security whatever for religious education. I believe with him also that the Voluntary Schools would very soon be brought to an end if that connection were severed. My fear has been for some time that the Voluntary Schools would be destroyed by the Board system. I believe they would unless you came to their relief. It is a tremendous power against the Voluntary Schools — unlimited rating — and you acknowledge yourselves that the rates are mounting to an alarming extent in many places. It is impossible that a large part of the community can go on maintaining their own schools, and paying besides these extravagant rates in favour of Board Schools. It is, therefore, for the interests of religion, and for the interest of the ratepayer that you should come in and relieve those who are supporting, at so large sacrifice to themselves, the only religious education which you have in the country. My own belief is that the tendency of Board Schools, of all schools supported by rates, is to the total exclusion of religion. I know very well that in many of the existing School Boards religion is fairly well taught. A compromise is effected, but you have no security for that continuing for a single year. I have been told, I believe on good authority, that in some of the Australian colonies it has come to this—that all the school books are carefully edited and every allusion to religion, even the very name of God, is expunged from them. That is a dreadful state of things—a state of things from which we are very far removed, but that it will come to it in the long run if we do not take some means to support Voluntary Schools I fully believe. I dare say some of your Lordships will hardly believe that story. I believe it because I have seen what has happened on the Continent of Europe, because what they called liberal principles in respect of religion have got a greater hold of the mass of the people than as yet they have in this country. ["Hear, hear!"] There is another danger about the unmitigated supremacy of the Board Schools, and that is the power which is going to be established over us by the teachers. The teachers have formed themselves into a syndicate or trade union, and they are furious and indignant if the slightest test or question is put to them as to what their religious views are. It will come to this, that not only will the religion of our people be at the mercy of the ratepayers—that would be bad enough—but it will be at the mercy of a syndicate of teachers, who consider it a point of honour that they shall believe nothing if they like. ["Hear, hear!"]

I look upon the passing of this Bill as a great epoch in the history of our educational system. I trust it will be followed by others, all tending in the same direction—perfect freedom to all parties, perfect equality as regards the State, but also equal payment to those who favour religion, nursing, it may be, the Churches to give you that which they can give, good secular and good religious education mixed. I should be very glad indeed to see the whole education of the country in the hands of denominational bodies, but there is one difficulty and objection which is fatal—you could not overtake the area. There are millions of men in this country who do not conscientiously belong to any Church whatever, and if you confine your support to the Churches you would, of course, leave out of your system altogether a very large part of your people. That is the fact that has driven us to the Board School system. Before I sit down I wish to refer to language used by one of my friends in regard to Scotland. Towards the close of last Session my right hon. Friend Mr. Mundella said:—

> "Look at the education of Scotland; how admirable it has been; what a great reputation it has had all over the world; how successful in educating Scotchmen in all the walks of life; a purely secular system."

My right hon. Friend added, "a system of universal boards, universal rating, universal popular control." Anything more grossly ignorant I never read. [*Laughter.*] There is a curious substratum of truth about it. It is true that in a literal sense there are universal boards, universal rating, and universal popular control, but the circumstances of the case are absolutely different and the effect is totally different. The education of Scotland has won its reputation under a purely denominational system. ["Hear, hear!"] It is some 300 years old, and it was started by the Reformers in inseparable connection with their idea of an Established Church. The schools were part of the Church. Each parish had its own school, and the governing body was the minister and the kirk sessions and the heritors. The schoolmasters must be all members of the Established Church. It was under that system that the Scotch education acquired its great reputation. It may not be known to all your Lordships that there are parts of Scotland into which, as we Protestants say, the light of the Reformation never penetrated. There are at this moment parts of the Highlands of Scotland which are predominantly Roman Catholic. There never was the slightest difficulty in the schools there about the education of the children. The conscience clause, so called in modern times, was in universal operation through the goodwill and good feeling of the people. The system in Scotland was changed, mainly in consequence of the break up of the Church of Scotland on the question of patronage. The management of the schools was thrown open to the ratepayers, but the schools are as denominational now as they were; they go on teaching their Catechism just as they did before, but, of course, anyone is allowed to leave when it is being taught. I am afraid that that system is totally inapplicable to England. If you had a universal system of School Board regulating the religious education of the country you would not be able to maintain, as we do in Scotland, religious education. I fully believe that if you do not come to the help of the Voluntary Schools, which are the only schools in which religion is effectively taught, a great calamity will happen to the people. I cannot help congratulating the Government upon the introduction of the Bill. I rejoice that for the first time they have put to a good use the great and glorious majority with which the people armed them at the last general election for the improvement of the social and political position of the country. [*Cheers.*]

Lord HERSCHELL: The noble Duke alluded to the good use to which the Government have put their majority in passing this Bill, but they were not able to obtain that majority's assent to the Bill except by the threat that if the independence which was exhibited last year was exhibited on this occasion the Government were prepared to resign.

The Duke of ARGYLL: Is not that a usual weapon of all Governments?

Lord HERSCHELL: It is a weapon of all Governments, but it is only a weapon of a Government with a majority of 150 when they know that that majority does not believe in the Bill they produce. The noble Duke said that, if you believe or do not believe, but wish your children to reach a certain degree of educational knowledge, you will equally get a grant. The Bill provides absolutely nothing of the kind. As to statutory equality, the noble Duke must have forgotten the provisions of the Act of 1870. The scheme of 1870 was what the noble Duke described it. We said, "Produce your educational results, and for equal educational results you will get equal grants." This had nothing to do with the religion taught in the schools, but that is altogether departed from here. Here the grant is given to only one set of schools; others might produce as good results, but they get absolutely nothing. The result, my Lords, is that this Bill is an endowment of denominational teaching out of the general taxation of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] It is the taxation of those who agree as well as of those who disagree, and it is compelling those who disagree with religious teaching to pay through their taxes for the support of this teaching. It would not be so if you gave the grants to all alike, but as soon as you take money from the general taxpayer and pay it only over to schools which give a particular religious teaching, you are using money from the public, and compelling them to endow schools the teaching in which they disapprove. I do not think the noble Duke appreciated the objection. Take the case of London. The Londoner has to pay his school rate. He supports a certain number of Voluntary Schools, and he has thus to provide by subscriptions and rates the education for the children. Lancashire provides for the same number of children, but Lancashire does it more largely by denominational schools. Lancashire, under this Bill, will get £114,000, while London gets only £44,000. London is called on to pay for Lancashire because Lancashire had chosen to prefer denominational schools. That is the long and the short of it. It was said just now that the people who support denominational schools all pay their rates. That is not so; and I say it is grossly unjust and unfair. How will the Bill work? In Hertfordshire the number of children is 33,816, and that county will receive £6,747. In Monmouthshire the children number 38,000, but that county, under the Bill, will receive only £3,200. Yet Monmouthshire will have to pay as much in taxation as Hertfordshire; it will have to pay for education given in another part of the country. There is an urban district in the county of Glamorgan of 14,000 children, chiefly Board Schools; the district will, under this Bill, receive £13. Birkenhead, with 13,800 children, will receive £3,268; yet the Glamorgan district will pay just as much as Birkenhead. On what principle of financial justice can that be for a moment defended? ["Hear, hear!"] I could cite any number of these examples; the Return is full of them. Take Barrow; with 8,595 children, it will receive £723; while Bury, with 8,160 children, will receive £2,040—three times as much. That seems to me radically and utterly unjust. But, then, it is only necessitous schools which will get any grants at all. I wonder how many there are in London. I venture to say the case is worse than I have suggested. We are told, further, that there is another Bill coming to relieve necessitous Board Schools? Will that relieve Londoners? Certainly not. It will be a further dip into Londoners' pockets. I believe that the extreme unfairness of the Bill will be realised throughout the country. I think I heard the noble Duke say that, even where there was no deficiency at all, they might get a grant to relieve the subscribers from giving subscriptions. That is a very startling statement, and absolutely and entirely destroys the whole of the security which it had been said was obtained from the words "having due regard to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions." What the noble Duke has said would justify the doing away with subscriptions altogether. The Bill does not say "having regard to the amount of the subscription," but "having due regard to the maintenance of subscriptions." It does not insist or give the means of insisting that a school district, which has hitherto ill-supported its schools, shall give more in future. It is only required to maintain its subscriptions. The most reverend Prelate sought to introduce an Amendment into the Report of the Education Commission in 1888, and in doing so he said that the duty of providing and maintaining a good system of elementary education is essentially a local duty. "We cannot recommend that in any case the grant from the Department shall exceed the amount provided on the spot." That principle is utterly departed from and abandoned. According to the noble Duke, however minute the local subscriptions, it would still be perfectly proper to give assistance. Now, my Lords, there is another provision which I think is likely to create much difficulty, and that is, the power to fix different rates for town and country schools. There have been two versions of the purpose of that provision in the House of Commons, one that it is meant to give more to towns as compared with the country, and the other to give more to the country as compared with the towns. Both those explanations were given by Ministers, and we shall be very glad to learn here what is intended. It is said, my Lords, that everything is left in blank to be managed by the Education Department. It may be very wrong of us not to have complete confidence in the Education Department, which the noble Duke would desire us to have. I do not know that I should not have confidence if these matters were to be managed by the officials of the Department without outside control; but the Vice President was not allowed to introduce the Bill, and was hardly allowed to speak upon it, and obviously he will not be allowed to administer it. I have no doubt he will continue to hold the office of Vice President, but I have the strongest conviction that he will not be allowed a word in the administration of this Bill. By whom, then, is it going to be administered? I believe that in this matter, what I call the clerical party have obtained the upper hand, and I believe that unless the administration of the Vice President accorded with their views he would be powerless. I should not have been opposed to a grant of 5s. all round. I think that would have been the only just way of dealing with the matter, and the only way of meeting the real and substantial difficulties which do exist in certain cases. I think there is a hardship in the case of Roman Catholic Schools which ought to be met. There can be no doubt that Roman Catholic parents do strongly object to their children being educated in any other than their own schools, and theirs is the only case in which the difficulty can be met without hardship to others, because they are generally congregated together in towns, and in places where there are Roman Catholic Schools there are other schools to which those who are not Roman Catholics can resort. I believe Roman Catholics would have been perfectly content with 5s. all round; but the Church of England would not. They say, "Give it to us, but do not give it to the Board Schools." I do not say the most reverend Prelates would say that, but I have seen it over and over again amongst the statements of those who have been speaking on this Bill; and, of course, everyone knows there is an intense jealousy of, and a bitter hostility on the part of many towards, the School Boards. The noble Duke alleged that those who oppose this Bill are opposed to religious education. There never was a statement further from the truth. Do the opponents of this Bill never put their hands in their pockets on behalf of denominational schools? It is absolutely and utterly without foundation to state that those who oppose this Bill withhold their support from denominational schools. It is alleged sometimes that Church of England schools exist because the parents of children prefer them to Board Schools. Not one tittle of evidence has ever been produced in support of that allegation. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Duke said that the existence of Voluntary Schools shows that parents prefer them. How does it show it? They have no opportunity of sending their children to other schools. In the greater part of the country they have no choice. ["Hear, hear!"] If the parents cared about it, there would, in my belief, be no need for this Bill; your schools would never have been necessitous. I have studied some subscription lists, and have found that the number of people who contribute is contemptibly small. The burden is put on a very limited number of shoulders, and that is the intolerable strain. ["Hear, hear!"] If that has not been the experience of right reverend prelates, their experience has been a very fortunate one. I do not believe that the laity of the Church of England do share the views of the Duke of Argyll about the religious teaching in Board Schools. I believe that the large majority of the Church laity would much prefer that their children should receive the religious teaching to be obtained in Board Schools, than the kind of sacerdotal teaching they would get in a good many Church schools. That may not be the view of the Episcopal Bench, but I venture to think that that is a subject on which I am as capable of forming a judgment as are right reverend prelates, and I am absolutely persuaded of it. Only the other day I read a sermon by a reverend Father, as he styled himself, in which it was stated that there were 1,500 clergy of the Church of England who taught that regular auricular confession was more important than mere Bible teaching. That is the kind of teaching the people of this country would be bitterly opposed to, and the view that Nonconformists, aye, and members of the Church of England, are to be called upon to support schools where that is the teaching, will intensify opposition to a Bill which will support such schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Many members of the Church of England think that, having regard to the tender age at which children are taught in elementary schools, and the very limited time given to teaching religion in the day school, the simpler the teaching is made the more likely it is to have effect; and if the teaching is confined to the simple elements on which all Christians are agreed, more good will be done than by trying to make little Churchmen or dissenters of them. There are institutions which I know well, conducted on undenominational principles, with Churchmen and Nonconformists on the Committees—educational institutions, more difficult to manage than day schools, because the children are taken in to Board. There is simple family prayer and teaching, in which all are able to join. Hostile to the Church? Certainly not. There is scarcely a year but what many from the school come up for confirmation, and are amongst the best candidates the Bishop receives. Yet this school is conducted on undenominational principles, and I venture to say there go out from that institution children trained in religion as satisfactorily, and as truly religion has as noble an influence on their lives, as any Church school or institution in the world. The religious education in Board Schools, however it may be regarded by the Episcopal Bench, is by the majority of the electorate regarded as satisfactory. There is no evidence to the contrary. There is much in support of it. During the London School Board elections, in spite of the Archbishop of Canterbury's letter deprecating the religious teaching in Board Schools, and his suggestion that the question of religious education was at stake, great majorities were won in the very districts of London where the most people resided whose children went to the Board Schools. I have felt it my duty to vindicate—and I am speaking the mind of multitudes in this country in vindicating—religious teaching in Board Schools. They would much rather have such teaching than a great deal of the teaching which, unhappily, as they think, is now going on in Church Schools. Now I want to say a word about the position of the Nonconformists. All ideas of being just seem to depart when people are pursuing their own ideas about denominational education. What would the Bishops in this House think if members of the Church of England were in the same position as Nonconformists are throughout the country, who have no alternative but to send their children to Church Schools? Where they do, the boy whose parents are known to be Nonconformists is subjected in many cases to petty persecutions. [VISCOUNT CROSS: "No, no!"] Does the noble Viscount speak for the whole country when he says "No"? I do not purport to speak for the whole country. Does my noble Friend mean that there are no such cases? I said "in many cases."

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: There are very few.

LORD HERSCHELL: Well, we will take it that there are very few. Would it not be felt a hardship if in a large part of the country no member of the Church of England could be a pupil teacher in a school? I can understand the difficulties of the Bishops about schoolmasters. You do not always necessarily secure a teacher who believes in what he has to teach. A man calls himself a member of the Church of England or comes from a Church of England training college. A friend recently told me that an unsuccessful candidate for a position with which he was connected turned out, in spite of his excellent testimonials, to be an atheist. What is felt is that there is no security what the religious instruction in denominational schools may be. It may be asked, how is this affected by the present Bill? It was said in the other House, "This is the present educational system, and it is not made worse by this Bill." But it seems to me that that is just what you do. You make it worse because, however much you may desire to have a School Board, you cannot get it in any district, although the majority wished it, if there is sufficient school accommodation. If you buttress up weak schools with public money, of course you diminish the possibility in those districts where the people are not largely supporting the schools of their disappearance, and the people having a School Board if they desire it. But you do this out of public money to which the Nonconformist contributes his share as much as any member of the Church of England does, and out of the money the Nonconformist contributes you perpetuate an educational system to an extent which is often hard and unfair. You are not giving the money equally all round, but giving it only to Voluntary Schools. I should not like it to be understood that intolerance or persecution of Nonconformists is found everywhere. But you find it in particular places, and where you find it the feeling it creates is not limited to the place in which it occurs.

VISCOUNT CROSS: The noble and learned Lord was speaking of it as a general system.

LORD HERSCHELL: It is part of a system, and would be felt to be part of a system if the case were reversed. The most reverend Prelate seems much amused that the Nonconformists should feel this to be a grievance. I am rather grieved, but I suppose I have no right to complain.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: If I said anything of the sort I should consider it my duty to apologise to the Nonconformists. But it never entered my head that I should be misinterpreted as the noble and learned Lord misinterprets me.

LORD HERSCHELL: The most reverend Prelate misunderstands me. I was not criticising anything he said. I did not mention his name or allude to it.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I beg pardon. The noble and learned Lord said, "The most reverend Prelate seems amused." I thought he referred to something I had previously said. I could not help smiling at one of his arguments, for I was much amused at the logic the noble Lord indulged in.

LORD HERSCHELL: The most reverend Prelate is entitled to be amused just as the noble Duke is entitled to tell us on this side that we are ignorant and that what we say is pure nonsense. It is the privilege which those who do not agree with you are entitled to. But if the case were reversed, and I were to put it from the opposite point of view, I do not think the most reverend Prelate would have thought it so bad or been so amused.

LORD TALBOT DE MALAHIDE interposed a remark which was understood to be that there were places where Board Schools existed, but where Voluntary Schools were not allowed to exist.

LORD HERSCHELL: There is no exclusion from the Board Schools of teachers of any religious denomination. There are many Church of England schoolmasters in Board Schools. But whatever exists in Board Schools does not exist in denominational schools. I have spoken of the injustice done by the Bill to Nonconformists because they are not represented, and naturally the audience in this House is not sympathetic on the subject. But, nevertheless, it is right and just that their views should be put before you, and it would be a great misfortune if it were thought—as I am afraid to some extent seems to be the case—that the undue hardships which they feel in connection with this Bill were regarded here either as ridiculous or unworthy of consideration. My great objection to this Measure is that it is essentially and radically unjust. ["Hear, hear!"] I know, of course, that it was passed by a great majority. It will pass into law; but the injustice and sense of injustice will remain. If there is anything that the people of this country have a deep-rooted regard for it is fair play, and what they believe to be justice. As I believe, this Bill is against that sentiment; it will not be a final settlement, and the day may come when those who rejoice at its passing may regret it was not founded on principles more equitable and just. [*Cheers.*]

*THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER said the noble and learned Lord had made pointed reference to Lancashire, and as he knew himself something of the circumstances of the schools there, perhaps he might be allowed to say a few words in explanation of what seemed to him an injustice. They had been told that in Lancashire four-fifths of the children were in the Voluntary Schools, and only one-fifth in the Board Schools, whereas in London one-third only were in the Voluntary Schools, and two-thirds in the Board Schools, and that in consequence of this a large number of London people would have to contribute to the taxes used in Lancashire to support the Voluntary Schools. But surely the noble and learned Lord had not fairly considered the position of things in Lancashire. The condition of things was that four-fifths of the parents of the children in primary schools were paying for education twice over; they were paying to the rates for the support of schools they did not use, and in contributions for the support of Voluntary Schools which they did use. It had been said by some that perhaps the enhancing of the rents of the working classes did not take place in consequence of the raising of the School Board rate. He could not conceive that. Suppose, for instance, working men lived in houses for which they could only afford to pay £10 a year before the School Board was formed, and in consequence of the formation of the School Board a rate of 1s. in the pound was raised in that place, clearly there must be £10 plus 10s. paid by someone. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble and learned Lord thought that landlords would not raise rents, and thus make the tenants pay it. But that was what took place. Four-fifths of the parents in Lancashire were paying, in enhanced rents, their share of rates for primary schools.

LORD HERSCHELL: But there are many people in Lancashire who pay no rates at all.

*THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER: But they pay them indirectly always.

LORD HERSCHELL: No, no!

*THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER felt sure, if the noble and learned Lord made a further examination of the matter, he would fully confirm what he had stated. The noble Lord's argument in respect of paying taxes might be retorted upon himself in respect of the paying of rates. If it was unjust that the London man should pay for the support of his own Board Schools, and then pay taxes, part of which went to Lancashire, it was surely unjust to call upon parents to pay money, part of which went to those schools which they did not use, while at the same time they were called upon to support their own schools. The noble and learned Lord had complained that the Voluntary Schools were not supported by the people who ought to support them. He disputed that argument. He dared say that rich people who ought to support Voluntary Schools failed to do so; but the noble Lord was never more mistaken in his life than when he supposed that the men who belonged to the working classes did not contribute to the support of the Voluntary Schools. He could assure him that in Lancashire many of the Voluntary Schools depended almost exclusively upon the support of the working classes. Not only did they pay the school pence, but they also made very large contributions at the annual collections which were made on behalf of the Voluntary Schools. At Bolton every year collections were made in almost exclusively working class parishes which amounted to between £300 and £400, and the clergy had told him over and over again that that money was provided by working men, who put aside for many weeks the large sums which they gave to these collections. It was asked why they appropriated what appeared to be a larger share than was their due share of the proposed grant of 5s. It was because it was proposed to give those who paid twice over for primary education some little compensation for the injustice they were suffering. If justice were done, the poor people and the rich people who contributed to the Voluntary Schools ought to be allowed to deduct the amount of the contributions from their school rates. ["Hear, hear!"] If, in consequence of a practical difficulty, they could not let them make such deductions, then, if they adopted any other system, they must give them what was the equivalent of their just share. The Government thought it was going to give them the equivalent of their just share, but 5s. was not altogether as much as was justly due to the poor parents in Lancashire. Still, by a method of rule-of-thumb, if they came to the conclusion that they could go as far as 5s., he said, "Thank you" with all his heart. It was not as much as they were justly entitled to; but it was something, and he was happy to get it. He thought the noble Lord did not thoroughly understand their position. With respect to the position of the Board and Voluntary Schools as regarded religious teaching, the noble Lord said there were a large number of people in England, Churchmen included, who would prefer the religious teaching of the Board Schools to the sacerdotal teaching in certain parishes. He was sorry to hear that there was in any parish what could truly be called sacerdotal teaching. But he did not think that nicknames were to be accepted as sufficient proof that false doctrine was taught. He had known people called sacerdotalists who had no business to be called such names. He held there were some few, but there were very few, schools in which extravagancies were taught, and no man regretted it more deeply than he did. They were a very small minority of the schools indeed; and he begged to assure the noble Lord that the mass of the schools connected with the Church of England went no further than the teaching of the good old-fashioned Church Catechism, and he did not think the noble Lord would consider that they were going too far when they taught that. If an apparent injustice arose in consequence of there being 8,000 parishes with only one school in each of them, was it the fault of the Church? This was an incidental consequence of their eagerness to do their duty in providing such schools when nobody else would. ["Hear, hear!"] To have a teacher appointed by the managers of a Church School was an absolute necessity. The noble Lord said undenominational instruction would be preferred by many Churchmen to definite teaching on Church lines. There might be some who called themselves Churchmen who would prefer such teaching as that, and as the noble Lord had given them a few specimens of extreme abuses on one side, he would give him one on the other. The other day he was told by a member of the Manchester School Board that he went into one of the Board Schools and spoke to the head teacher about the manner of giving religious instruction. The answer was this:—

> "If you will go round this school with me I will show you half-a-dozen different sects being represented in the teaching of my teachers. I have a Roman Catholic, who is teaching as he has been taught. There is a Unitarian, who is teaching as he has been taught. There is a Swedenborgian, who is teaching as he has been taught. I have an Independent who is teaching as he has been taught, and a Wesleyan and a Baptist, each teaching as he has been taught."

If these were people of a superior capacity, and would only teach those general elements of religion with which the noble Lord was so much in love no harm would be done, but a man of small capacity, who knew nothing of religion but what he had been taught himself must teach it exactly as it had been taught to him, and the result of that was, that in that school actually six sects were being taught; and that must always be possible, although it did not exist in all Board Schools. What could a School Board do? It could simply put forth a programme of religious lessons, and say, "Teach those lessons." But the teaching of lessons depended entirely upon the teacher; therefore these abuses must occur in other schools. He ventured to say, in answer to the noble Lord's criticisms on denominational teaching and preference for undenominational teaching, that there were dangers on both sides; and he did not think that the dangers of denominational teaching were anything nearly equal to those of undenominational teaching. He desired to say one word on another point. The noble Lord asked why did parents, when a new school was built, prefer the Board School to the Voluntary School which was near them? He had just recently walked through between 50 and 60 parishes in his diocese, and the result of his experience was that where there was competition the parents preferred, in Manchester, the Voluntary to the Board Schools, although one was palatial and the other very simple, and worse than simple. They might say, Why, then, object to the erection of these schools? One reason was, that they were often built so near the Voluntary Schools that there were not sufficient scholars to fill both; and then, of course, the Voluntary Schools suffered by the withdrawal of a portion of the children to fill the new school. He was quite sure that the noble Lord had exaggerated both the injustice that would be perpetrated by the Bill and the inconvenience of perpetuating the system which the Bill was intended to support. He did not think this Bill would be a settlement of the question. He did not accept it as doing full justice to the schools in the North. It was scant justice, but it was some measure of justice. It would do them good. It would help them to go on living, and he hoped that a future and a more liberal generation would grant them a Measure that would enable them to go on living and flourishing. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON remarked that there were two points which appeared to be generally conceded. One was that there were necessitous schools in this country which required further assistance, and the other was that there was no intention on the part of anyone in this House to put an end to or destroy the denominational schools. With regard to the first point, the Lord President of the Council appeared to imply that, because there was now a necessity for increased assistance to many necessitous schools in the country, therefore the calculations of those who were the authors of the Act of 1870 had been erroneous. As one of the authors of that Act he could not admit the view of the noble Duke. It was not in the least unnatural that after the lapse of more than a quarter of a century calculations made at that time should be found now inapplicable, though they were perfectly applicable then, and in this fact there was no reflection upon those who made those calculations. It was always understood by the authors of the Act of 1870 that the standard of education then fixed would be gradually raised. The late Mr. Forster and himself thought that it would be unjust to the existing schools at that time to pitch that standard too high, but they always expected and intended that the standard would be raised, and accordingly, and quite rightly, the standard of education had been gradually raised by the Education Department. It was necessary this should be so with the gradual advance of education, and there was no ground of complaint against the Education Department, and especially against his right hon. Friend Mr. Acland, in this respect. It should be also borne in mind that with the progress of sanitary science the sanitary requirements of schools had been increased, and this had added to the cost of maintenance. That being so, there could be no doubt, and so far as his knowledge went there was no doubt, that there were a large number of necessitous schools requiring further aid, and so far as the Bill provided that aid it was a step in the right direction. He rejoiced to see there was no intention on either side of the House to make any attack on the existence of denominational schools. It was admitted on all hands that their maintenance under the present system of education in the country was a necessity, and he held that opinion very strongly. He was not about to enter into the controversy between Lord Herschell and the right reverend Prelates on the Bench opposite. It might be true that those who ought to subscribe to denominational schools did not do so. He expressed no opinion upon that, but it was within his knowledge that, so far as the Roman Catholics in this country were concerned, there were a very large number of schools urgently requiring additional assistance. If his noble and learned Friend saw the plate go round among the poorest of the people, and the pence thrown on for the support of Roman Catholic schools, he would agree that in this case there were voluntary subscriptions, and also a great demand for further assistance. Being then one of those who held very strongly that the continued existence in full efficiency of denominational schools was necessary as part of the educational system of the country, he was glad that a Measure should be provided for their assistance, only he wished that the means were of a different character, as he would explain. He did not propose to argue the question at any length or to enter into subjects of religious controversy bound up with it, and which were not well suited to the atmosphere of Parliamentary discussion, but there was one strong argument not yet alluded to in this Debate, and very little referred to in another place. The present system of education as established by the Act of 1870 was a compulsory system, for under that Act parents were compelled to send their children to school. He was one of the authors of that Act, and approved of the then novel principle of compulsion, and approved of it still; but it did seem to him that, when parents were compelled to send their children to school, the State was bound to be very careful to pay respect and consideration to the conscientious feelings of parents. ["Hear, hear!"] Conscientious feelings did certainly enter very strongly into this matter. He would say nothing of any other religious body but that with which he was himself connected, but no man would for a moment attempt to deny that among the Roman Catholic body the conscientious objection to sending their children to schools where they would not receive a distinct and definite dogmatic teaching was universal. He would not exaggerate were he to say that this feeling was unanimous among priests and people. Under the circumstances, when you have a compulsory system he did not think it could be controverted you were bound, so far as you reasonably could, to take care that you provided schools suitable to meet the conscientious desires of the parents of the children who were compelled to attend. ["Hear, hear!"] So far as this seemed to be a main object of the Bill he would offer no objection or opposition to it. He held it to be a necessary and reasonable proposal that the State should give to necessitous schools—he did not say only to denominational schools, but should give to necessitous schools—further aid; and he held it to be a necessary complement of our compulsory system that schools should, so far as possible, be provided to which all could conscientiously send their children. But he was sorry to say, that, when he turned from the general principle of this Measure, and looked at its proposals and the mode in which its object was to be attained, his feeling was very different in regard to it. Those proposals appeared to him in many respects, both by what they contained and yet more by what they omitted, to be open to very grave objections; and though he did not want to speak at all disrespectfully about a Measure which the Lord President told the House had been so long in preparation, and which had superseded another scheme of which they had heard for the first time to-night, and of which he thought they were entitled to know more than the Lord President had been good enough to tell the House, if he were not to shrink from criticism he would be inclined to say it was one of the most blundering Measures that had ever come within his Parliamentary experience. Certainly it was one of the most curious Measures he had met with. He had had in either House a Parliamentary experience not far short of 50 years, and he had never seen another Bill of this description so curiously drawn and containing such singular provisions. In the first place he strongly objected to the separation of the two classes of schools which were involved in this legislation. The noble Duke had told the House that there was a Bill for the purpose of making grants to necessitous Board Schools about to be brought in, and that it would very shortly be introduced in the other House of Parliament. When that Bill was brought in they would be able to judge of it; they could not form any particular idea of its nature from the noble Duke's reference. When the Bill was before the House they would be able to judge of its sufficiency to meet the needs of those Board Schools that required further aid. But his objection to this Bill in this respect was that it did not deal with both classes of schools, and he objected, not in the interest of Board Schools, for the promised Bill might, he did not know whether it would, meet all their requirements. He objected to it in the interest of denominational schools because he thought an injury would be done to those schools in separating their interests from those of the Board Schools. It was not only money they wanted, not only the money to be given now, they wanted a reasonable hope of the permanence of the arrangement, and that hope would have been largely increased if both classes of schools had been dealt with in the same Bill. By leaving out Board Schools jealousy and irritation were created, and the security of the position of denominational schools was weakened. It would be observed that he spoke of these schools not in the technical language of the Bill as Voluntary Schools, but as denominational schools, because he thought the latter was the more appropriate and more honest term. The value of these schools and the desire for them was because of their denominational character, and after this Bill passed he doubted if there would be much of the voluntary element attaching to them. It was a great mistake to separate the two classes of schools, though he would not say it was for the purpose of setting them in antagonism. Instead of giving to the denominational schools the security that they would have had for the permanence of the Measure if they had dealt at the same time with

Board Schools, they had raised up irritation in this matter which would seriously, he was afraid, come back to them in the future. With regard to the associations which it was proposed to establish under this Bill, he confessed that, after reading the Measure and a good deal of the discussions which took place in another place, he found it extremely difficult to understand what was to be their nature. But he was still more puzzled since he had heard the Debate that night. The Lord President was very vague about the subject. He recited a great variety of different kinds of associations that might be established under the Bill, but he did not say which of them he preferred or which of them was going to be established. The Archbishop of Canterbury knew his mind perfectly on the matter, and if the most rev. Prelate had to settle the matter they would have understood exactly their position. These associations were to take part in the distribution of public money, and yet—and he said it was without precedent in Parliament—the Government had so drawn their Bill that it was impossible to say what would be the nature of these associations. The noble Duke had no idea. The most rev. Prelate knew very well what he wanted, and so did the Vice President. The most rev. Prelate wanted denominational associations with the Bishops of the Established Church at their head. The Vice President of the Council wanted associations of a totally different kind, for he told the good people of Girton the other day that he wanted associations on no narrow basis, and which did not represent any particular sect. The two ideas were absolutely opposed and contrary to one another, and he did say that to set up associations in so vague a manner, leaving it entirely to be determined by an Executive Department of the Government what was to be the nature of these institutions, was a step without precedent in the history of their legislation. He was astonished when he looked at this Bill as a Measure brought in by the Government of which Lord Salisbury was the head, because for years and years back Lord Salisbury had been always inclined to criticise the Education Department and to express want of confidence in it; but now they were going to give to that Education Department, which they were told last year was so overworked that it was absolutely necessary, in order to relieve it, to revolutionise the whole of their educational system, one of the largest and one of the most difficult duties that it was possible to confer upon any Department of the public service. He could not think that that was desirable, nor did he think it a right step. He did not think it was the way in which Parliament should be treated, and he did not think they would find it would result in very satisfactory consequences. His noble Friend, Lord Herschell, spoke of some of these associations as they might be established in connection with the Established Church, and he seemed to think that they would lead to considerable difficulty and trouble. It was not for him to say anything upon that point. He did not expect it in the Roman Catholic body, but that did not make the slightest difference in regard to their position in the face of Parliament. It appeared to him that the Government had forgotten the true interests of the very denominational schools for which they were legislating. Their interest was that those controversies which had done so much mischief to the general cause of education, and which were so threatening to the best interests of denominational schools, should be appeased. He confessed he was alarmed when he heard the Bishop of Manchester speak of this Bill as only a temporary Measure—that he wanted more and was going in for more. If that was the course which was to be taken by the Bishop of Manchester and those who thought with him, he ventured to say it was one likely to be very disastrous to the denominational schools of the country. What they wanted to do was to settle this controversy and to settle it once for all, so far as it was possible to use such an expression in regard to any human undertaking—to get rid of the ill-feeling, the ill-will, the irritation, the jealousy, and the suspicion which had been created by the great proportion of the provisions of this Bill, and to give it time fairly and honestly to work in the interests of the schools which it was intended to apply to. ["Hear, hear!"] He regarded it as a grave omission from the Bill that it did not touch at all the question of what was called the popular representation in the management of these schools. ["Hear, hear!"] In regard to that question, there were two classes of schools to be considered. The one class consisted of schools in those parishes in which there was but one school, and the other class consisted of those schools in districts in which there was a variety of schools of different kinds. The law compelled parents to send their children to school in that parish in which there was only one school, and in that case, to his mind, the claim that the people of the parish should in some way or another be effectually represented upon the management of the school was an overwhelming claim. He had long thought that the omission to deal with that case was one of the greatest omissions in the Bill of 1870. In the other case, the claim was very much less strong, but still, they were going to increase the assistance to schools out of the public money, and he held that it was right and proper that there should be upon the management of those schools some representation of the public of the district.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Does the noble Marquess say that the Roman Catholics should have some popular representation?

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON said that what he was saying applied to all schools. He was not drawing the smallest distinction, and if the noble Duke had read the discussions in the House of Commons he would have perceived that the Roman Catholic Members of that Assembly took precisely the same view of the subject that he was taking now. He thought the infusion of an element of this kind into the management of these schools would be desirable in the interests of the schools themselves. In many districts in his part of the country this had been done, not merely by the admission of certain nominated persons, but in certain cases by election. It had worked exceedingly well, and he firmly believed that, if a system of that kind were to be adopted, it would do much to strengthen the position of the denominational schools in the public estimation. So far as it was the principle of the Bill to give further assistance to necessitous schools he was in accord with it, but he must say that to his mind the manner in which it was proposed by the Government to attain their object was nost unfortunate. He believed it was wanting in the permanency which was one of the most important elements of an arrangement of this kind. He believed it would tend, not to allay, but to keep up the controversies which existed at the present time. The Government had, for some unknown reason, refused to insert in the Bill a clause that the rules and regulations of the associations should be laid before Parliament. But they did not suppose that therefore those rules and regulations would not be known, would not be discussed, and would not be criticised. And they did not suppose that that criticism and discussion would tend to prolong those very controversies which might have been settled if the Government had only frankly and honestly told Parliament the nature of the associations it was intended to set up. He regarded the Measure with considerable distrust and alarm. He believed that the details of it were not calculated to work in the interest of the schools the Measure professed to favour, but on the contrary were likely to imperil the position of those schools and increase the controversies which had gathered around them.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): I confess I rise, my Lords, to reply to the noble Marquess under circumstances of considerable difficulty, because I have not the least notion which way he is going to vote. [*A laugh.*] I had intended, had not the noble Marquess so frankly stated what his views were about the Act of 1870, to remind your Lordships of one or two observations made by the Government of the day upon the subject of denominational schools. In the Debates in 1870 Mr. Gladstone admitted the necessity of dealing with the two sets of schools, and said they must fulfil the engagements they had already entered into with the Voluntary Schools. The noble Marquess said just now, "You have separated the two things—the provision in respect to the denominational schools and that for the Board Schools." I shall be glad to learn what he meant. What is it the noble Marquess wants? I am afraid I shall pause for a reply.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I am too well accustomed to Parliamentary practice to interrupt the noble and learned Lord. [*A laugh.*]

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: May I say the noble Marquess is too old a Parliamentary hand to give an answer which is not satisfactory? [*Laughter.*] It is better if you cannot give a good answer to give none at all. The noble Marquess forgets one thing he said which was most important—it was that, where there is only one school and you make attendance at it compulsory, there is a great injustice which ought to be altered. Perhaps I was wrong.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Did the noble and learned Lord say I said it was unjust to make children attend these schools?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Without providing for their conscience, that is what I understood.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I said that when you did that it was very desirable and necessary to give the people of the parish some representation on the management.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: It was in another part of his speech.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I did not say what the noble and learned Lord says I do say.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The noble Marquess was speaking of the Act of 1870, and he said he had always felt since then that the forcing of children to go to school, and not to have provided some form or religious instruction appropriate to their own conscience—

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I am sorry to interrupt the noble and learned Lord, but I an sure he does not wish—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: If the noble Marquess says he did not say it—

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I have all along looked upon it as a great omission that the Act of 1870 did not provide for some representation of the people in the case of single-school districts. That is all I said.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I at once acquiesce, if the noble Marquess says he did not say what I understood him to say. The noble Marquess will observe this—that if education is compulsory, and there is only one school, a child must go to that school, whatever the sect or religious denomination he belongs to. I regret the absence of my noble and learned Friend Lord Herschell, because I should have liked to have replied to his speech in his presence. I regret very much the tone of some of his remarks. The whole tone of the speech was an attack upon the Church of England and the Church of England schools. He gave us one or two examples of what he described as Church teaching. I entirely deny that that is Church teaching. Then he drew a picture of what he called undenominational teaching, but I confess I thought it was a good picture of denominational teaching. The practical question is whether or not this Bill is to pass in order to give what is admittedly required for the purpose of maintaining those schools which under the Act of 1870 you have promised to maintain. Some complaints have been made of the Education Department, but I ask whether there would be the smallest chance of this Bill becoming law if some new authority were created? What was it we were asked to do? We have got this scheme to distribute money in the face of the people and subject to a Government Department and Parliamentary criticism, and you are asked to throw the scheme out for some other scheme in the minds of noble Lords, but not disclosed up to the present time. We have heard what we ought to have put in the Bill with regard to the associations who are to advise the Government Department. We know very well that the money will not be distributed by the associations, but by the Department. All the associations have to do is to bring certain facts before the Department—facts as to the necessity and circumstances of the schools. I think that my noble Friend Lord Herschell, in his objections, disclosed a hostility to denominational schools which the noble Marquess (Ripon) would, I think, be the last to appreciate. There can be no doubt that ever since 1870 the two sets of schools got on very well together; but I concur in the distrust of some of those who have presided over the Department. No one can doubt that on occasions the administration of the Act has been in the highest degree hostile to denominational schools, and that from time to time attempts have been made to destroy some of these schools. I can give a case within my own knowledge. The school got on extremely well for some time. Then it was required to make some sanitary alterations. The money was raised in the village to do this. Then the Department came down upon them again and demanded that there should be built an additional place for the scholars in the meantime. That was the last straw, and the result was a Board School. All through the country at such periods an effort was made to destroy some of these denominational schools. That is what in fact has produced the distrust in the School Boards. Now the opponents of the Bill come forward and complain. They suggested that words should be put in the Bill which would make it absolutely unworkable, and which would cause Parliament to spend the whole Session over it, the Government to be blamed in the end. Now, my Lords, as to the Bill, I venture to think that this has been a great cry over a very little matter indeed. [*Cheers.*] The object is to supply necessitous schools. It is put in the smallest compass, and the machinery is of the simplest. Because it is simple and contained in about a dozen lines we have all sorts of references and suggestions very much outside the object of the present Measure. The simple question is, are the necessitous schools to be allowed to perish for lack of support? I hope your Lordships will, by a majority proportionate to the great majority in the other House, pass this Bill. The Bill passed there by a majority of 200—[*cheers*]—and I am sure your Lordships are not disposed to disagree from their determination that this provision should be made. ["Hear, hear!"]

*EARL STANHOPE said, as a former member of the London School Board, and also a member of a Voluntary School in London as well as in the country, he trusted he might be allowed to make a few remarks on the Bill. The Act of 1870 no doubt gave a great impetus to education, but it established a dual system, and produced great inequality. It worked well for years, and he hoped that the compromise might have been maintained. He could not help thinking that if, in the days of Mr. Forster, local government had existed, if there had been County and District Councils, there would have been then a system of decentralisation, and that they would not have the dual system. He agreed with the most rev. Primate when he said that a clear division between primary and secondary education was not laid down as it should be, and he hoped that this would be effected before long, and that they would have a strong and satisfactory scheme of secondary education established throughout the country. Then three years ago Free Education was established, and no doubt that was logical, since they had demanded that Education should be compulsory; but it worked very unequally in the north and in the south. In the south they had much less difficulty to contend with, because the fees were very small, but the fees in the north rose to 8d. and 9d. per head. He was under the impression that any such scheme to relieve inequality would be hailed with satisfaction, and his surprise was great that there should have been such a long discussion on so small and simple a Measure. He also thought noble Lords opposite followed the views of the people, and when a Bill was sent up to their Lordships' House by a majority of 200, he could not see why they should be put to the trouble of dividing upon it. ["Hear, hear!"] Lord Ripon had said that necessitous Board Schools ought to be treated at the same time as necessitous Voluntary Schools, but the noble Duke, the President of the Council, had informed the House that a Departmental Committee had found after inquiry that there were insuperable difficulties in the way of such a proposal. There were great difficulties on the face of it, inasmuch as Board Schools were supported by rates and Voluntary Schools by subscriptions, and by a Section of the Act of 1870 necessitous Board Schools were clearly defined, and unless that Section had been repealed, he did not see how necessitous Board Schools could have been treated in the same way as necessitous Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] He could not see that there was any reason to suppose that voluntary subscriptions would fall off. He believed the Church of England was more fully alive to her duties at the end of the century than she was at the beginning. He believed the provision as to associations was a most important part of the Bill. By experience alone could their duties be exactly defined. From the working of an association with which he was acquainted, he was confidently of opinion that this provision would conduce not only to proper management, but also to the proper disposal of the funds available for poor Voluntary Schools. Lord Spencer had said that he objected to diocesan management, but diocesan management did not mean that the laity would be excluded. On the contrary, he thought it was clear that the associations would be comprised half of clergy and half of laity. He felt confident that when the existence of Voluntary Schools was in question, the associations would take care that they were worked well in order that such a good balance might be shown in every case as would redound to the credit of Voluntary Schools. A point was raised by a noble Lord opposite as to the exact position of Her Majesty's Inspectors. It seemed to him, without having any information about it, that they would continue to perform the same duties as now. They would pay surprise visits and report to the Department as usual. The Department would ask the advice of the local associations, who would have a far better local knowledge than the inspectors. He really believed that under these associations, as established, Roman Catholic and British and Foreign Schools would have fair and full treatment. Their claims would be considered on the same system as other Voluntary Schools—namely, as to the number of pupils and the funds at their disposal. Of course, the Church commanded such great influence in National education that she had a greater number of schools to provide for, but he believed that Roman Catholic and other schools would have the full grant where it was shown that they were well managed and that their students were numerous. He trusted there would be no delay in passing this Measure, which had long been looked forward to. ["Hear, hear!"]

*LORD NORTON said that, although both in their Lordships' House and in another place the Bill had been described as a conglomeration of controverted principles, he could hardly conceive a simpler proposition than one to make a Treasury grant to Voluntary Schools. He thought the opponents of the Bill had rather invidiously represented it as a Measure of relief to Voluntary Schools, as if they were in a necessitous state. It would be far better described as a security given to the public for the continued service of Voluntary Schools, which to them was a most essential matter. The pauper claimant was not the Voluntary Schools, but the public, who could not do without them. But, after all, what was the nature of their claim? They represented the foundation of the whole spirit of the national system of education. Their programme was described as the elementary education of the poor. Soon after they began their work a great deal of secondary instruction was introduced—very important work, but something quite distinct from the elementary education Voluntary Schools were formed to give. In 1870 School Boards were formed to supplement Voluntary Schools, and they were furnished with unlimited public money to carry out this higher education. It was clear that if the public required higher education to be given in elementary schools they must pay for it, whether in Voluntary Schools or Board Schools. It was the whole of the proposal of the Bill that the higher education now introduced into elementary education should be paid for, the volunteers continuing what they volunteered to give—namely, elementary education. To mix primary and secondary education was, no doubt, a great mistake. The mixture of the two damaged both, and neither got the freedom it needed. The two stages of primary and secondary education were distinct in their nature, and in their claim for public support. Elementary education was the training, from infancy up to the age when children went into employment, for the use of their faculties, and to inculcate principles for the intelligent and honest use of them in whatever line of life they followed. Secondary education was special apprenticeship to various lines of life. These definitions were not mutually exclusive. Primary education in general culture gave a great deal of practical knowledge, and secondary education in apprenticing carried on general culture. The two stages of education were distinct; but so long as both were imparted in the same school, the Voluntary Schools had as fair a claim to public support for the higher stages as the Board Schools. Secondary education had not the same claim as elementary education to public support. Nothing could injure the spirit of the country more than that the State should unnecessarily relieve parents of the charge of the education of their children. With regard to secondary education it was absolutely wrong that the public should be taxed for the training and bringing up of the sons of rich manufacturers. The great municipal technical schools springing up were not so much used by the artisan class as by the sons of rich manufacturers, who so trained their sons for business at enormous public expense. The "cross scent" drawn over the subject by starting a parallel claim for necessitous Board Schools to that of the Voluntary Schools was absolutely absurd. The two claims were not only not parallel, but were not even similar. The claim of the Voluntary Schools that the higher education which had been added to their programme should be paid for by the public was not like the claim of the necessitous Board Schools who volunteered nothing, but asked that the rates should be relieved by the Treasury. The Government had shown a want of backbone by giving in to that as a parallel claim, however good in itself. Mr. Acland, in the Debates in the House of Commons on this Bill, said, there was no guarantee in the Bill that the grant to be given to Voluntary Schools should be spent in improved education. Nothing could be more absurd. It was the only ground of the claim of Voluntary Schools that they should have the means of giving the advanced education now called for by the country in elementary schools. It was altogether wrong to look on the vote as one of relief to Voluntary Schools. It was not in any way contemplating them as necessitous schools. They had volunteered at the private expense of their supporters to make a gift of elementary education to the nation. That was not an act of necessity. They had performed their undertaking, but as other kinds of education are now expected of them they said, "We cannot be expected to provide the means to meet them also, and they must be met by the demanding public. That was the entire proposal of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

Lord HERRIES said he could not help expressing satisfaction that the Government had introduced this Bill. But he should be sorry that it should be supposed that the Catholics were satisfied with the amount given them under the Bill. They accepted it as an instalment, and did not necessarily consider it final. They were satisfied with what they had, but they could not consider what they had received as final, because the people who supported Catholic schools were poor, and the difficulty of raising subscriptions for the support of Catholic schools was greater than in any other denomination. If the House knew the difficulty Catholic clergy had to raise subscriptions, going up and down streets canvassing; the little concerts they got up to raise £2 or £3 to keep the schools going, it would understand that the Catholics had a real grievance. ["Hear, hear!"] The fact was, the position in many cases had become intolerable. The difficulty of raising the money necessary for the schools became greater every year, because the requirements of the Department became greater. It was all very well to say that under the Act of 1870 the grants were raised. The schools then were very different from what they were now. Sanitary requirements were greater. The result was, the cost of the maintenance of children in the schools had risen from £1 7s. 5d. in 1872 to £1 18s. 11¼d. in 1895. Grants had risen, but not in the same proportion as the cost of maintenance, and the result was voluntary subscribers had to find a larger sum in subscriptions. There would be imminent danger if this Bill were not passed of many schools becoming gradually extinct. But one thing Catholics were determined upon—that religious education should continue to exist in this country. [*Cheers.*] He was glad to find that religious education would continue, and that this Bill would tend towards that end. The noble Lords who had spoken had admitted the whole principle of voluntary education. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said that the Nonconformists suffered a grievance by having often to send their children to Church schools. If they were not satisfied let them build schools of their own. In many parishes where there were not more than twenty Catholics, the latter had their own schools. There was no question of preference of one school over another with regard to the grant. If there was any preference it was given to Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Catholics who were poor had not only to support their own schools, but contribute to the rates for the support of Board Schools. Look at the salaries given in Board Schools. He happened to have something to do with a school in the south of Scotland. There were only 117 children, and the head teacher got £240 a year; the second teacher, £140; and the third teacher £60; or more than £400 a year for the teaching of 117 children! As the Duke of Devonshire said, they were becoming the servants of the teachers, and they would have to tackle the question how far they were to meet the demands of the teachers. He was as anxious for the higher education of the people of this country as anyone. He was Chairman of the Technical Education Committee of his county, and he had taken the greatest interest in higher technical and secondary education. But let them have their money's worth, and let all be educated on equal terms. He was most thankful to the Government for having brought in this Bill. He had never been in favour of getting money from the rates, because he had always believed that if they had it they would never be able to prevent popular control. He thought that representation of the ratepayers would, to a certain extent, endanger the independence of their schools, and for that reason he had always been opposed to getting assistance from the rates. But it was a different thing from their getting assistance from the public Exchequer, where they had the inspectors from the Education Department to see that the money was properly expended, the accounts audited, and that there was no danger of any malversation of the funds in any way. He trusted their Lordships would give a Second Reading to the Bill, and that the Voluntary Schools in the country should have the benefit of this grant, and that those who wished to give their children a religious education might have an opportunity of giving that religious education to their children in the future.

The BISHOP of LONDON said he ventured to interpose in this Debate to express his hopes that their Lordships, by passing this Bill, would secure, at all events for some time, a cessation of a controversy in which it seemed the chief object had been for some time to obscure the real issue. Echoes of that attempt had reached their Lordships that night—loud echoes, he ventured to think—in the speech of the noble and learned Lord Herschell (whom he regretted not to see in his place) who, with exuberant geniality, walked, he might say pranced, upon a well-trodden road, flogging a dead horse. He did not propose to follow the noble Lord. It was enough for him, if he might venture to express the hope with which he began, that for a little time there might be secured, by this Bill, a cessation from the controversy which stood in the way of any real educational progress. It was somewhat to be regretted that for so long a period what had been called the education question should simply have resolved itself into a question of a dispute between two different kinds of schools. Surely education contained many problems to which it would be most desirable that public interest should be given, and he believed it was only if public interest were given to the contents of education itself, and not the mere externals of it, that only so could they really reach to any wise conclusion upon the subjects which were now so much discussed. It seemed to him that much confusion which at present arose came from the fact that administrative considerations were applied to what were purely educational questions. It was solely for the purpose of the convenience of administration that there was invented, by the Act of 1870, a system which he thought was now tolerably admitted on all sides exactly satisfied nobody. It seemed so very ingenious and easy to say, "As people do not all care about one topic, by all means let us drop out of the consideration of it everything about which there can be any disagreement, and surely the residuum may be accepted by everybody with good heart and courage." That method had been tried, and it had not succeeded. It had not succeeded in obtaining popular acceptance. They had heard much that night about the conscience of Nonconformists and of Roman Catholics. He ventured to think the members of the Church of England had a right to possess a conscience also, and their conscience had been little regarded in the controversy that had lately gone on. It had been supposed that, provided a small minority had its rights respected, and supposing all other bodies had, at all events, attempts made to secure them justice, that the body which still remained the great religious representative of this country might practically be disregarded and must put up with anything that was left to it. The members of the Church of England asked only the opportunity of being allowed to teach those doctrines which they conscientiously believed; and, moreover, the advocates of the voluntary system were convinced that in maintaining that system they were not maintaining something which merely made for the preponderance of their own body, but were maintaining principles which were essential for the maintenance of education itself. Not to go into the larger questions of principle involved, he would simply call attention to one minor point which was concerned almost with mechanism, the fact, namely, that the existence of Voluntary Schools was the sole and real guarantee that the education given in Board Schools should be religious at all, for so long as Board Schools and Voluntary Schools went on side by side the Voluntary School acted as an automatic check upon the tendencies of the Board School by compelling it to respect the wishes of the parent. No one desired to take, and no one could take, the children out of the guardianship of the parents and teach them anything, religious or secular, to which the parents had decided objection. But in the case of the Board School system it was perfectly easy that an untoward concurrence of circumstances should lead to a considerable disregard of the wishes of the parents in the matter of religious education. If there was close by a Voluntary School, or, even if not close by, a Voluntary School which, by considerable sacrifices, was accessible, then the withdrawal of the children from the Board School and the sending them to the Voluntary School became a very serious matter indeed for the School Board. They were at once pulled up in their attempts to disregard the obvious wishes of the parents; and the check acted immediately. Lord Herschell had said, in the course of his speech, that there was no tittle of evidence that parents preferred denominational schools. The preference of parents was somewhat hard to discover, except, perhaps, by the process of the Census Paper. But some facts came before one's notice, and one came before his notice in his previous diocese of Peterborough which seemed to him exceedingly significant. At a public meeting a secularist speaker had made the usual statement that the one interest of the clergy of the Church of England in maintaining the Voluntary Schools was that they might make themselves masters of the consciences of the children. He was stopped by a working man, who mounted the platform by his side, and said:—

> "I shall tell you what I think about this matter. I am a convinced Nonconformist. I hope to live and die a Nonconformist, and I trust that my children will follow in my steps, but at the present moment I send my children to the Voluntary School in preference to the Board Schools, because I know the master of the Voluntary School—the Church school—is a religious-minded man, and I know that the management of the Church school is such as will secure that proper care should be taken for religious training."

It seemed to him that such an opinion was absolutely well founded. It was useless to try and belittle the significance of denominational differences. Denominations differed in just those points which came most home to the mind of the child. If they differed from one another it was not, he admitted, about the great truths, because they were common to them all; but they differed about the particular way in which those truths had to be applied to the life and conscience of the individual. For that reason, if for no other, if religious education was to be real and genuine, it must be denominational and have a definite point of attachment to the life and character of the child who was being taught. That was appreciated by the great body of the English people, and he believed that they were distinctly desirous that Voluntary Schools should be maintained, because they felt that in them they had the one safeguard for the maintenance of religious education at all. This Bill was a trifling Bill, totally undeserving, in his opinion, the attention that had been paid to it in another place. It simply aimed at maintaining the *status quo*, and it had the great advantage that it tended to save them from the danger which inevitably came when principles were sacrificed to convenience of administration. The suppression of Voluntary Schools by the brute force of financial pressure would leave behind it an inextinguishable sense of wrong, and would produce results most dangerous to the well-being of society.

It was ever dangerous that principles should be sacrificed to the mere interest of convenience of administration. From this danger the Bill attempted to save. It left the schools just in the position where they were. It left them so for the time when the mind and conscience of the nation could more distinctly and definitely express its opinion than it had hitherto done. He thought there was always a danger when the system founded on principles was extinguished by a system founded merely on expediency, and the system exhibited by the Board School was one which owed its very origin to the consideration of expediency of administration. The compromise of 1870 had been found to be no compromise, and it was clear that some new arrangement would have to be made. Time would do much towards indicating the lines which that arrangement would take, and the mere exhaustion of use of arguments, in which there was little and the poverty of which was increasingly exhibited every time they were used, would do much. But still more would be done by the shifting of their point of view as regarded education. Hitherto public interest had been almost entirely given to the pure externals of education—the way in which the schools had to be built, the salaries which masters and mistresses had to be paid—and, as yet, the public mind had not been turned at all to what were the real contents of their educational system. It was only when the meaning of education itself was more widely known and more keenly felt that it would be possible for them to attain to even the basis of a new arrangement which would be satisfactory to all sides; and neither he nor any of his brethren wished for any arrangement that would not be satisfactory or just to all concerned. It was a matter of deep regret to them that there should be even the appearance of injustice towards anybody whatever in their just claim to teach those things of which they were profoundly convinced. This Bill did not err on the side of excess, it merely gave time with due regard to economy. It contained some valuable suggestions, and not the least valuable was the power of association tending to call into existence a central body to direct the affairs of Voluntary Schools. In this way much would be done to remove eccentricities of management, which sometimes unfortunately did occur, and to which attention had been drawn more than once during the Debate. None regretted these eccentricities of management more than those who were interested in the maintenance of religious education, and he hoped they would pass away under the greater publicity and the more regulated system this power of association would bring about. This Bill merely recognised that it was inexpedient to settle the questions now open in regard to our educational system by the force of mere financial pressure that had been unforeseen. These questions were too delicate and far-reaching to be settled by any such appeal to mere force. The future, the near future he trusted, would more than justify the respite which this Bill afforded. The future, he believed, would recognise that those who now supported the cause of Voluntary Schools were animated by a nobler conception of the nature of education, and he would venture to say by a higher ideal of the true nature of civil and religious liberty than their opponents of to-day. [*Cheers.*]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I entirely sympathise with the feelings expressed by the right reverend Prelate who has just sat down, that it is greatly to be regretted that bitter controversies should arise on the subject of education; but I differ from him in thinking that the Bill will tend to allay those controversies, and, on the contrary, my principal reason for being opposed to this Bill is that I believe it will stimulate controversy and lead to bitter controversies and animosities on the whole subject. The right reverend Prelate seems to regret the compromise of 1870—a compromise I well remember, for I was a Member of the Government which passed that Act. That compromise was the means at that time of getting free from bitter controversies that then prevailed—and I think that, although, of course, as is the case with all compromises, it is open to objections from both sides—I think that the 25 years of complete peace we have enjoyed since then will be sacrificed by the present Bill, and I believe myself that those who are the most ardent now for commencing the destruction of this compromise will live to bitterly regret that they ever touched it. ["Hear, hear!"] I make no complaint of the right reverend Prelate; it is only natural that one occupying his position should hold the opinion he does as to the necessity for teaching little children dogma. It is, of course, a loose term, and I know that all opinion may be called dogma; but what I mean is the teaching of those truths of religion that can only appeal to the more mature understanding. I have myself an absolute conviction that there is no delusion greater than to suppose that such teaching is necessary for little children. There are some simple principles which undoubtedly every man who has any religious feeling would wish to have taught to children; but when I see the controversies that take place because children are not taught this or that dogma, I confess I think zeal for a particular denomination is greater than zeal for the education of the children. The noble Duke opposite made the remarkable discovery that the Bill is founded on the voluntary principle—was a wonderful instance of liberalism and freedom. Not only do I not think the Bill is based on the voluntary principle, but I think the Bill is very likely in the end, if not at once, to destroy the Voluntary principle. ["Hear, hear!"] The Voluntary principle means the support of schools by voluntary subscriptions. Now, at the present moment about 76 per cent. of the cost of so-called Voluntary Schools is paid by the State, and when this Bill comes into full operation I think that state of things will be realised which the Lord President spoke of in 1876 when the 17s. 6d. limit was introduced—that Voluntary Schools in point of fact can no longer be called voluntary, and will be called by the more appropriate word "denominational." The meaning of this Bill is that for the first time there is a special endowment by the State about to be given to denominational schools. Contrary to the Act of 1870 the Bill gives a subvention to one class of schools. It is very true we are told that there may be a Bill for giving something to the Board Schools, but I gathered from the noble Duke that it is not intended to treat the Board Schools on a footing of equality, in this respect, with the denominational schools. Then, I say, the old foundation of statutory equality disappears. I recognise as much as anyone in this House that it is right and proper that, where you find that the funds are not sufficient to maintain the schools in a proper state of efficiency, the State should come to the assistance of the schools. That, I apprehend, is the case for this Bill. But then, observe, you relieve, or profess to relieve, one particular class—those who support the schools. What is the principle upon which the schools were originally held to be supported? The meaning of it was this—that in certain districts in the country where the inhabitants preferred to support the schools by subscriptions, they gave their money in subscriptions and they had their Voluntary Schools. In other parts of the country, where they did not come forward with subscriptions, the money was supplied by rates. But it appears to me that a fair system demands that the locality shall contribute in subscriptions as much as another locality contributes in rates, else there is no equality whatever. What you say here is this: Here are certain districts which do not come forward with subscriptions sufficient to maintain their schools on a proper footing, and therefore you will step in and give them the money of the State. That is to say, that their default is to cause them to be treated better than those who have not been in default. ["Hear, hear!"] The ratepayers, in my opinion, are every bit as much entitled, neither more nor less than the subscribers to the Voluntary Schools, to be assisted by the State. What is the real ground of this Measure? I think it is a substantial ground. I was very sensible of it at the time when I had the honour to hold for a short time the position of Lord President. What then took place was this. It was pointed out, and I think unanswerably pointed out, that there was a considerable number of schools which were behindhand in efficiency, and, no doubt, among those were a considerable number of Voluntary Schools. The standard of education had been improved. Naturally, as time went on, the standard which was considered sufficient in 1870 ceased to be a sufficient standard, and it was necessary, in the opinion of all those interested in education, that the standard should be raised. This put undoubtedly a very severe pressure on many Voluntary Schools. I know it was thought that Mr. Acland and myself had a deep design, by putting pressure on Voluntary

Schools, to destroy them and to substitute Board Schools. I can assure the right reverend Prelates, who gave a great deal of trouble at that time, that we never had any such design. All we did think was that we were bound to see that the schools were efficient, and if the result was that Board Schools had to be established that undoubtedly did not absolve us from the duty of seeing that the schools were efficient. That is the real reason which has caused this Bill to be brought in. My view is that this money should be given to the schools for the purpose of securing and increasing the efficiency of the schools, and for no other purpose. My opinion is that in the Bill itself it ought to be limited, and that it should be distinctly provided that the money shall be spent for that purpose and for that purpose only. Now we know—we did not know before—that it is going to be spent for other purposes, because the noble Duke told us to-night very frankly and honestly that in the case where the subscriptions fell short, the money would be given for the aid of the subscribers, even though it was required for the efficiency of the schools.

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Not necessarily because the subscriptions fell short, but where the resources of the locality, in the opinion of the Education Department, were slender.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: It will be given in aid of subscriptions.

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: It might.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: It may be so given. Therefore it seems to me that that establishes an unanswerable case for giving the grant in all cases. That brings me to touch upon the provisions in the Bill giving it to necessitous schools. This has been said to be a very simple Bill. It is a remarkably simple Bill, because to a great extent it is a skeleton Bill. This is a mere sketch of a Bill. I never saw a Bill brought before Parliament with an expression like "necessitous" in it without any definition of it. I do not blame Her Majesty's Government for not giving a definition, because I firmly believe that no definition is possible. But what is the conclusion which I draw? This, that the only safe mode of proceeding in this matter would have been to give the grant of 5s. all round without going into the question of whether this or that school was necessitous. On the general ground that the standard of education has been raised, that the expense is necessarily much larger than it formerly was, it would have been reasonable and proper to give a subvention from the State and to give it to every school in the country which complies with the educational requirements of the Department. That, I believe, would have been a simple, workable, and, on the whole, a just system. That is my answer to the noble Lord who sits on the woolsack, who twitted us with not presenting any alternative. That is the alternative which we would have proposed. That is the alternative which we believe would have been wiser than the present Bill. I am bound to say that personally I am entirely in favour, and always have been, ever since the passing of the Act of 1870, of Board Schools; but, on the other hand, I recognise now, as I recognised when I was a Member of that Government, that the denominational schools are a portion of the educational system which no one will venture to propose to destroy. That being so, as it is recognised by all of us in the present state of opinion in this country, and under present circumstances to be a necessary part of our system, I recognise as much as anyone in this House it is necessary that these schools should be efficient and sufficient. But what I object to is the mode in which it is proposed to be done, and I object to it so much that, although I am in favour of giving to the denominational schools such assistance as they require, I shall record my vote against the Second Reading as a protest. ["Hear, hear!"] There are one or two points to which I wish to refer. Amongst other things you will find here that there are to be different rates in town and country, and I was rather disappointed, though not surprised, that the noble Duke did not give us any explanation of that. What one would like to know is which of these two categories is to be favoured. ["Hear, hear!"] I have tried to find out what is likely to happen, and I lighted upon a statement made by the Vice President, which in other circumstances I probably should have regarded as conclusive. But as the Vice President appears to have not the smallest influence with the Education Department to which he belongs, at least, so far as this Bill is concerned, I am afraid my quotation may not have so much weight as it otherwise would have. But this is what he said in writing in a review in 1896:—

> "In the country the Voluntary Schools were better off than the Board Schools. There is no power and no necessity for levelling up as in the towns. The Voluntary Schools can hold their own without further pecuniary support. The rates levied in School Board districts are a greater burden on the people than the subscriptions in parishes which have Voluntary Schools. It is rather, indeed, the Board Schools which require financial assistance to enable the instruction given in them to be levelled up to the same efficiency as that given by their rivals."

I should infer there would be a rate fixed for the town higher than that fixed for the country, and I doubt whether that would be perfectly fair. So much for the provisions of the Bill. Let me refer to the general effect of the Measure. I do not wish to say one word that is in the least offensive to the right rev. Bench opposite, but I cannot disguise from myself that not in this country only, but in every civilised country, there has always been a violent struggle on the part of what I must call the clerical party, on the part of bishops and priests in the Christian Church, to obtain more and more power. ["Hear, hear!"] I and many other laymen think that it is our paramount duty to resist an extension of that power. ["Hear, hear!"] We respect the office which they hold, we acknowledge their services to the community in the cause of religion, but we desire that they shall not interfere with lay affairs beyond what they now do, and that they shall not obtain more power over the laymen. I have no doubt it is not so in the minds of all who promote it, but I regard this as a deliberate attempt to increase the clerical power over the schools of the country and so over the population, and I am firmly persuaded, notwithstanding all we have heard of the love of certain parents for Voluntary Schools, that as this controversy proceeds you will find the English people will not be dominated by priests.

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount CROSS) said he would not enter into the question which the noble Lord raised in the concluding portion of his speech. He believed that the laity were quite determined to live in peace, amity, and friendship with their clerical brethren, and that the clerical brethren wished to live in peace and concord with the laity. ["Hear, hear!"] To say that the giving of 5s. per child to certain schools would increase the clerical power was the greatest nonsense he ever heard. [*Cheers.*] Let him go back for a moment. In the Queens' Speech of last year it was stated that the Government intended to bring forward a Bill for the purpose of aiding Voluntary Schools. When the Bill was brought forward it was decided to enlarge the scope of it very much, and one of the complaints made against the Government by noble Lords opposite was that the Government had exceeded what they had said in the Queen's Speech, and had brought in a much larger Bill than was ever hinted at during the election.

LORD HERSCHELL: We never raised the point; we never had an opportunity.

*VISCOUNT CROSS presumed the noble Lord did not separate himself from his colleagues in the other House, and that was the complaint those colleagues made The Oppositon tendered the Government a piece of advice. They said:—

> "if you had only limited your Bill to what was stated in the Queen's Speech and at the General Election, you would have had our assistance; but, as it is, we shall oppose you bitterly."

They opposed the Government with so much effect that there was not time to carry the Bill. Perhaps foolishly, they had adopted the advice of noble Lords and their colleagues, and had this year brought in a simple Bill to assist Voluntary Schools. They had a right, therefore, to count upon the assistance of those who sat opposite. What had taken place to-night only showed how little promises must be counted upon. [Lord HERSCHELL: "There were no promises!"] Well, there were statements made. Anyone who would read the Debates in the House of Commons last year would see that the statements quite bore out everything he had said. ["Hear, hear!"] But how had they been fulfilled? The opposition to this simple, and certainly short, Bill was more vehement than that offered to the Bill of last year. [*Opposition cheers.*] He did not like the word mandate, but if ever there was a mandate given at a general election it was given at the last that these schools should receive substantial assistance. What was the noble Earl's first objection? He said that it would stimulate controversy. That was a matter of opinion. He thought that controversy was bad enough before this Bill was brought in. If anything would calm controversy, it would be the passing of this Measure. Then he said they had broken one of the great promises made in 1870, because he said there was to be equality of treatment. He thought the noble Lord must have forgotten the words of the Act of 1870. There was special power given to assist poor Board Schools, if the necessity arose; and he did not, therefore, see that the noble Lord had proved his case. His next objection was that the money ought to be given for the efficiency of the teaching of the schools. The Bill simply said that 5s. was to be given, and it was to be distributed by the Education Department. The Department could only distribute the money so as to promote the efficiency of the schools. [" Hear, hear! "] It would not be denied that the Department was a very good judge of what a necessitous school was. Then the noble Lord found great fault with the associations, but in many counties and towns there had been associations which had worked very well. Then the noble Lord said he had a plan which would be carried without the smallest difficulty in the other House.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I really said nothing of the kind. [*Laughter.*] He would be a bold man who would say that any Bill would pass the House of Commons without the smallest difficulty.

*VISCOUNT CROSS understood that the suggestion was that they should give 5s. all round. Many schools did not want 5s., while others would want more than 5s. [*Opposition laughter.*] He was surprised at the suggestion from the noble Lord. He could not conceive any proposal which would involve a more absolute waste of public money than to give 5s. all round. The object of this Bill was to relieve necessitous schools and, of course, if the extravagant plan of giving 5s. all round, suggested by the noble Earl opposite, was to be followed, one school could not be assisted more than another; but under this Bill that could be done. He had now dealt with all the objections raised by the noble Earl, and anyone who had read the violent speeches against the Bill which had been made in another place, would hardly have expected such a tame list of objections from the noble Earl. It was said that voluntary subscriptions would fall off if this Bill was carried; but the Church of England would go on paying, as it had done in the past. Since the passing of the Act of 1870, the Church of England had spent no less than 15 millions of money on their schools. [*Cheers.*] The Roman Catholics, he believed—and to their honour be it said—had never given up a single one of their schools—[" hear, hear! "]—and the Church of England was just as determined now, as it always had been, to maintain its position as the great teaching power amongst the vast majority of the people, and they would not forfeit their character simply because this Bill was passed. This Bill was asked for at the last election; it was carried in the House of Commons by unprecedented majorities, and he hoped their Lordships would carry the Second Reading that night by a majority as decisive. [" Hear, hear! "]

On the question "That the Bill be now Read a Second time the House divided :—

CONTENTS	109
NOT-CONTENTS	15

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Abp.
Halsbury, L. (*L. Chancellor*)
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)
Cross, V. (*L. Privy Seal*).

Norfolk, D. (*E. Marshal.*)
Argyll, D.
Newcastle, D.
Portland, D.
Somerset, D.
Westminster, D.

Abercorn, M. (*D. Abercorn.*
Ailesbury, M.
Bristol, M.
Exeter, M.
Lansdowne, M.

Lathom, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
Camperdown, E.
Carnwath, E.
Clarendon, E.
Coventry, E.
Cowper, E.
de Montalt, E.
Denbigh, E.
Derby, E.
Doncastor, E.
(*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
Ducie, E.
Feversham, E.

Harrowby, E.
Lanesborough, E.
Lucan, E.
Minto, E.
Morley, E.
Portarlington, E.
Portsmouth, E.
Romney, E.
Saint Germans, E.
Sandwich, E.
Selborne, E.
Stamford, E.
Stanhope, E.
Stradbroke, E.
Suffolk and Berkshire E.
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
Verulam, E.
Waldegrave, E. (*Teller*)

Falkland, V.
Knutsford, V.
Llandaff, V.

Lichfield, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Manchester, L. Bp.
Southwell, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Addington, L.
Ampthill, L.
Armstrong, L.
Arundell of Wardour, L.
Ashbourne, L.
Ashcombe, L.
Bagot, L.
Balfour, L.
Belper, L.
Braye, L.
Castletown, L.
Chelmsford, L.
Cheylesmore, L.
Churchill, L. (*Teller*)
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Clinton, L.
Colchester, L.
Crawshaw, L.
Digby, L.
Fingall, L. (*E. Fingall.*)
Forester, L.
Glenesk, L.
Hampton, L.
Harlech, L.
Harris, L.
Hatherton, L.
Herries, L.
James, L.
Kesteven, L.
Kinnear, L.
Kintore, E. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lawrence, L.
Lock, L.
Mendip, L. (*V. Clifden.*)
Morris, L.
Mount Stephen, L.
Northington, L. (*L. Henley.*)
Norton, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Poltimore, L.
Ponsonby, L. (*E. Bessborough.*)
Ranfurly, L. (*E. Ranfurly.*)
Robartes, L.
Rothschild, L.
Rowton, L.
Shand, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Stratheden and Campbell, L.
Sudley, L.
Tredegar, L.
Wenlock, L.
Wentworth, L.
Willoughby de Broke, L.
Windsor, L.
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Kimberley, E.
Spencer, E.
Oxenbridge, V. [*Teller.*]
Aberdare, L.
Ashton, L.
Boyle, L. (E. Cork and Orrery.)
Davey, L.
Farrer, L.
Herschell, L.
Hobhouse, L. (*Teller.*)
Monkswell, L.
Reay, L.
Thring, L.
Wandsworth, L.
Welby, L.

Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Friday next.

House adjourned at Five Minutes before Eleven o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, 30th March 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

As amended, considered.

PART IV.—FRANCHISE.

21. From and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight the fifth section of the Dublin Corporation Act 1849 shall be repealed, and instead thereof be it enacted that the name of the occupier of any house, warehouse, counting-house, or shop within the borough of Dublin, the owner or immediate lessor of which is primarily liable to pay the poor rates leviable in respect of such premises shall be inserted in the rate-books, and the guardians of the poor, the Collector-General of Rates, or any other person or persons making out or striking any such poor rate, shall enter in the occupier's column of the rate-books the name of the occupier of such premises, and such occupier shall thereupon, so far as regards the qualification for the franchise conferred by the said Act or any of the recited Municipal Acts in relation to the municipal franchise in the said borough, be deemed to be rated in respect of the said premises.

MR. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said that he rose to move the omission of Clause 21. There were a number of Amendments standing on the Paper in his name, but they were all practically involved in the first Amendment. He objected to all the franchise clauses which altered the existing franchise of the Dublin Corporation. The Bill was a private Bill for regulating the price to be paid for water as between the Dublin Corporation and various surrounding townships, and a portion of the Bill dealt with certain matters connected with the Fire Brigade. Opportunity had been taken of inserting in this private water Bill clauses dealing with the franchise of the Dublin Corporation —a matter which had nothing to do with the object of the Bill as promoted. Last year a similar Bill was introduced, and franchise clauses were inserted, but the House of Lords eventually threw out the franchise clauses. Without these franchise clauses certain hon. Members objected to the Bill, and it was lost altogether.

It was unfortunate that in these private Bills, dealing with purely local matters—which ought to be kept altogether apart from burning questions of controversy—year after year these questions of franchise should be introduced to the peril of the main object of the Bills. On the present occasion the franchise clauses would practically destroy altogether the very small Unionist minority which was represented upon the Corporation. ["Hear, hear!"] At the present time the Corporation of Dublin consisted of 60 members, of whom 49 were Nationalists and 11 were Unionists; and he should have thought that, having regard to the fact that Unionists paid a very large proportion of the rates of Dublin, even Nationalists would not have objected to a very small minority representation. ["Hear, hear!"] There were only sufficient Unionists on the Corporation to represent the views of those who differed from the great majority. The Nationalist majority could elect whom they pleased for the various offices; they could adopt whom they pleased for Lord Mayor, and pay him a salary largely contributed by the Unionists. But the Nationalists were not satisfied that there should be any Unionist representation at all on the Corporation—[*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"]—and with that view they introduced last year certain franchise clauses into a Water Bill, and they now proposed to repeat the experiment in this Bill. If that were not the fact, he wanted to know why this Nationalist Corporation introduced these clauses at all? ("Hear, hear!"] At the present moment the franchise was given to all occupiers of any rateable tenement whatsoever, but when the burgess roll came to be made out, any name could be objected to which had not been upon the rate book for a period of 12 months. In all cases where the rateable value of a tenement was over £8, the names of the occupiers were put upon the burgess roll, whether they were entitled to be on or not, and very often considerable expenditure was incurred in having the names which ought not to have been put on struck off. The present Bill proposed that the Collector-General and other persons who had the right to frame these lists, should put on every person whom they found in occupation, irrespective of their qualifications, how long they had been in occupation, or whether their rates had been paid or not. The result would be that upon this burgess list there would be hundreds, perhaps thousands, of persons who were simply weekly tenants, moving about from time to time; and the only way to get them struck off would be by the Unionist Registration Societies serving notice, which must be heard before the assessors, after considerable delay and at great expense. There would be an impossible state of things created if these clauses were allowed to pass. For one Parliamentary Division of Dublin it cost £1,000 a year to keep bogus names off the burgess list, and they might imagine what it would cost to get the names off the lists for all the other divisions of the City. ["Hear, hear!"] The present system had worked well since 1849, and gave a large majority to the Nationalists, but if this proposal were adopted it would be absolutely impossible, even at great expense, to deal with these small occupiers, who would be put upon the lists, and the few remaining Unionists upon the Corporation would be absolutely swamped. Under these circumstances he could do nothing but oppose these franchise clauses. Before the Committee there had not been a single word of discussion about these franchise clauses, and under these circumstances he asked the House to omit Clause 21.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had told the House that the clauses in the Bill to which he objected proposed to put upon the burgess list of the City of Dublin persons who had not paid their rates, but he had not informed the House that he had himself given notice of his intention to move the omission of the very clauses which required persons to pay their rates before they could be qualified to be placed upon the list. It was scarcely fair for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to take that course, and then to complain that the Bill would enable those who had not paid their rates to be placed upon the list. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had also said that this was a proposal to sweep away altogether the Unionist minority upon the Corporation, but last year he had proposed a scheme under which the Unionist minority would have been preserved. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, however, had come down to that

House and had opposed that proposal. The franchise proposals in the Bill had not been inserted in that House or by the Committee upstairs. They had been inserted in the Measure with the approval of the great majority of the citizens of Dublin when the Bill was originally framed, and if the right hon. and learned Gentleman objected to them he should have opposed the Second Reading of it. What would happen to this Measure if the clauses to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman now objected were rejected. Why, the Bill would undoubtedly be lost. He had offered to the Conservative Party to introduce into the Bill his minority clauses of last year, but in doing so he had received no encouragement from the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Let them go high or low, they could not please the Conservative Party, and they would not even put fortrusted that the Measure as it stood ward any proposition of their own. He would receive the sanction of Her Majesty's Government. There was nothing to prevent the Conservative Party from obtaining a *locus standi* when the Bill came before the House of Lords, when they could be heard by counsel. ["Hear, hear!']

Mr. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said that the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Carson) was entirely in error in stating that the Bill would alter in any way, even by a vote, the representation of the burgesses on the burgess list of the City of Dublin. The only difference his proposal made, and he contended that it was dishonest to attempt to make it, was that when a man claimed he must lose his day's work in order to go to the Court to establish his claim. The right hon. and learned Gentleman and his Party were taking advantage of that. If the Unionist Party in the City of Dublin had really nothing else to depend upon than this mere trick by which they propsed to deprive a certain class of the burgesses from getting on the burgess list without having to serve a claim that year, then he did not think it would commend itself very strongly to the citizens. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of preserving the Unionist minority in the Dublin Corporation. The Unionist minority had this scheme before them and approved of it, but afterwards they altered their opinion with regard to it. He had not been opposed to the Unionist minority having a fair representation. On the contrary he was strongly in favour of every Ward in the City having at least one Unionist representative, and time after time he had endeavoured to impress that fact upon his Friends. By it he thought they would get a much more desirable class of Unionist representation, by men representing the business and commerce of the City. They were entirely opposed to the business of the City being conducted on party and political lines, but it was because they would keep alive that system of party warfare in the different Wards that he should most strongly oppose the proposals of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to be under the impression that, no matter how short a period of time a man occupied a house, he was entitled to get on under this arrangement; but such was not the case. The Bill did not alter the existing law; it was only the inclusion of a different number of persons in the operation of the law. He appealed to the House to agree to the proposals, inasmuch as by them there was not a single man added to the register who would not have had the franchise before. The qualification was in no way altered, and all that was done was to simplify the process of registration and make it automatic. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said the point he wished to put before the House for its serious consideration was whether a private Bill, introduced for the purpose of increasing the water supply of a town, was the proper occasion for an abstract discussion like that they were engaged in. The House had a right to ask whether its time should be taken up day after day by the intrusion of these political matters into the ordinary private legislation of the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. Serjeant HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said perhaps he might be allowed to intervene in the character of one who for a very long time had been a resident burgess and taxpayer in the City of Dublin. In that capacity he earnestly pressed the House not to accede to the Motion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University. He regretted, for the sake of Ireland generally, that the right hon. Gentleman could no longer be classed as a resident or taxpayer in Dublin. They regretted that as almost a national loss.

MR. CARSON: I do pay taxes in Dublin.

MR. SERJEANT HEMPHILL said the right hon. Gentleman had misconceived the object of these clauses which did not extend, or attempt in any way to alter, municipal franchise. They were altogether clauses of procedure framed for the purpose of getting rid of what had been felt to be a crying grievance. In order to qualify to be a burgess, the premises which were occupied must be rated premises and the rates must be paid. According to the existing practice when the premises were valued under £8, the occupier's name was not to be on the list at all. Very often it was impossible to tell who the owner was. The object of this Bill was to assist the proper officer to easily ascertain the name of the person actually in occupation of premises under £8, and enable that person to get the franchise in case it should be proved that the rates were paid. As the case stood now, these occupiers were frequently disfranchised, because the landlord did not trouble himself to pay the rates in time. Following the precedent of the English Municipal law, the franchise was extended to women, and very properly in his opinion. In the case of the Belfast Bill, and the Londonderry Bill, municipal and franchise clauses had been inserted into private Bills. Last year the minority clauses were struck out in that House, but the franchise clauses went up to the House of Lords and were struck out there under a Standing Order. They all knew that year after year promises had been given by one Government and another to remedy the defects in the Irish municipal law, but the matter was still indefinitely postponed. No reasonable argument had been advanced why the House should not endorse what the Select Committee had done. As to the objection which had been put forward in regard to the Unionist minority in the corporation, he thought the House would fail in its dignity if it rejected a Measure otherwise unobjectionable merely on the suggestion of a supporter of a particular party, that that party might be injured by it.

*MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) hoped the House would not reject these clauses which included one conferring the franchise on duly qualified women, and was inserted in consequence of the Instruction to the Committee which he had carried in the House. These clauses had been approved by the Committee which had considered the Bill. He ventured, on this occasion, to associate himself with hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Irish cheers*]. Belfast enjoyed a practical assimilation of the Municipal and Parliamentary Franchises, and women could there vote in municipal elections. He thought the proposals in these clauses were fair and reasonable.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said it was not the intention of the Government as a Government to take sides in this discussion or to attempt to influence the votes of hon. Members. Speaking for himself only he should support the Amendment—[*Cries of* "Oh"]—moved by his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dublin University. He did not take this course on the grounds urged by his right hon. Friend the Member for the Thanet Division. He admitted there were grave inconveniences in introducing such clauses into private Bills. But that objection if it were to be taken should have been taken on the Second Reading stage and not on the Report stage.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said he did not raise that objection as a point of order.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said in the second place both sides of the House were to blame if blame were to be assigned anywhere in regard to this matter. Last year he had himself on behalf of the Government, opposed an Instruction which introduced this principle, and on that occasion he was opposed by no less an authority in matters of propriety and order than the right hon. Gentleman the hon. Member for the Bodmin Division, and he had the greatest difficulty in carrying his own Party with him on that occasion. Under these circumstances he could not support his right hon. Friend in opposing these clauses on the mere ground that this was a private Bill. So far as he personally was concerned on the other occasions when franchise clauses had been introduced into private Bills for Ireland, he had not raised any voice of dissent, but on all those occasions the effect of the franchise clauses which it was proposed to introduce, was to give representation to those who did not possess fair representation. Was that the case on the present occasion? The hon. and learned Member for Louth had admitted that Dublin was a fair case where minority representation would in itself be reasonable.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Yes, and the right hon. Gentleman did not support me when I proposed it last year.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said he did not support the proposal on the ground, as he had already explained, that he had objected to a similar proposal when made in the case of Belfast. He had acted in the matter with perfect consistency. The hon. and learned Gentleman had admitted by his action that Dublin would be a suitable case for the adoption of minority representation. It appeared to him that the registration law in Dublin was very complicated and he was not quite sure that he understood it. But it appeared that the existing state of the law did give to the minority in Dublin the opportunity of obtaining representation which those clauses if they were passed would take away; and therefore on the broad and general ground that a representation less just than the present would result in Dublin, he would support the Amendment of his right hon. Friend, the Member for Dublin University.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said he thought the speech to which they had just listened the most reactionary they had heard from the right hon. Gentleman who officially represented Ireland in the House of Commons. They had gradually become accustomed to the attitude of benevolent neutrality which was now the favourite attitude of the right hon. Gentleman when any Irish proposal was made. And that from a right hon. Gentleman who as he himself had declared had come into office with the determination to kill Home Rule with kindness! Those clauses proposed to do for the City of Dublin what had been done for every municipality in England by public and general Acts thirty years ago. The right hon. Gentleman said that this was a technical and complicated matter and that he was not quite sure he understood it. But it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman, holding as he did the responsible post of Chief Secretary for Ireland, to master the subject and to give the House light and guidance in the matter. He was amazed that the right hon. Gentleman should have opposed those clauses. English Members would be familiar with their effect when he described them as compound householder clauses. It was put to the House as if the clauses were political clauses and as if they involved some question as between Nationalists and Conservatives. They did nothing of the kind. They were an attempt to give the poor man an interest in Municipal matters—to confer on the poor householders of Dublin a right which the rich householder there had long enjoyed, and which the Prince of Wales' Committee recommended seven years ago. The Bill did not confer the franchise on any single individual who had not at present a right to the franchise. Under the existing law the poor householder must lodge his claim and prove it in the Law Courts and the only thing those clauses did was to give the franchise automatically and to dispense with that necessity. The present state of the law in the City of Dublin was a gross scandal, as anyone would see who compared the existing burgess roll with the population, and then examined the state of things in that respect which existed in English towns. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet had said it was a scandal that Irishmen should be continually occupying the time of the House at private business with proposals dealing with the Municipal franchise. But the fact that those proposals had been made over and over again was a censure on the House for its neglect of Irish interests. The reform of the Irish Municipal franchise had come up for consideration many times in the House. In 1880 the Liberal

Party put the reform of the Irish Municipal franchise in the forefront of their programme, but the reform had not come yet and it was only by the action of individual Irish corporations in embodying reform schemes in private Bills that any improvement in the condition of things had been secured, with the result that there was hardly a corporation in Ireland that had not its Municipal franchise regulated by private Acts. Two years ago his hon. Friend the Member for North Louth succeeded in passing an Irish Franchise Bill through the House of Commons, but the first action of the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was to move the rejection of that Bill in the House of Lords and to have it thrown out. The action of the Chief Secretary in opposing those clauses was enough to drive Irishmen into the consideration that nothing but bombs and dynamite would get reform for Ireland.

*Mr. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) said that he would not support the Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University if he thought it would deprive any working man in Dublin of his municipal vote. But it was not so much a question of the alteration of the law as the alteration of the situation. Under the 21st Clause the Registrar General would have imposed upon him the duty of placing upon the voters' list the name of every person returned to him as in occupation, and when that name was placed on the list the person was entitled to remain on as a voter until he was put off by an objection.

Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON said the duty of the Registrar General was not to put on everybody in occupation. The person put on must be the person in occupation of the rating. For instance, a person in occupation of a portion of a house or a room, could not be put on the list.

*Mr. DANE said that there was probably no person in the United Kingdom who so thoroughly understood the Registration laws, as the hon. Member for the Harbour Division. He could understand the hon. Gentleman's desire to maintain the franchise clauses of the Bill because by them there would be put on the voters' lists, several thousand voters about whose occupation right the Registrar General would have no evidence. The result would be that the Unionist Party in Dublin, of which he was an humble member, would be obliged to serve several thousand fresh objections. The rejection of the clauses would inflict a hardship on no man. Every man in occupation for twelve months was entitled to be on the list, and if he was not on the list all his Party had to do was to serve a claim for him.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that the right hon. Member for Dublin University last year voted against the Bill because it contained no franchise clauses; and now the right hon. Gentleman voted against it because it did contain franchise clauses.

Mr. CARSON: The hon. Member is in error. I assisted to strike out such franchise clauses as were in last year's Bill.

Mr. W. FIELD said that when the Bill came from the Lords with the franchise clauses expunged, the right hon. Gentleman voted against it. It was evidently difficult to please the right hon. Gentleman. Ever since the Unionist Government came in, the Irish Members had been invited to bring in a Bill dealing with Municipal Franchise; but whenever they did, their proposals were always resisted by the Unionists. The Franchise in Dublin was very limited, and the desire was simply to obtain the same conditions as obtained in English municipalities. These franchise clauses had been placed before the citizens of Dublin, and were supported by the Unionist members of the Corporation.

Mr. CARSON: As I understand, they repented of it afterwards.

Mr. FIELD said that there was such a thing as contrition being too late. The Corporation had suffered a great hardship for many years by the Bills having been defeated on all sorts of frivolous objections, and by having been compelled to spend so much money in promoting successive Bills. He hoped the House would pass the Third Reading.

Mr. J. COMPTON RICKETT (Scarborough) said that in the Select Committee before which the Bill came there was no opposition to the franchise clauses. The Bill was not in the ordinary sense a water Bill. It reconciled certain complicated differences between the Dublin Corporation and the surrounding townships as to the water supply, but it was practically an omnibus Bill. The corporation had been before the House of Commons twice and before the House of Lords on the question, and they were entitled to some consideration. He did not know whether the House felt called upon to support its own committee—[*cheers*]—but he was surprised at the attitude of the Chief Secretary, and he hoped that Unionist Members generally would be disposed to allow the corporation to get their Bill through, and not to drive the corporation back on the conviction that questions of this kind would be better treated in Dublin. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.) rose to move the Adjournment of the Debate, in order to give the Chief Secretary an opportunity of considering whether he would support the Bill without the franchise clauses.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! I could not accept that Motion. The Chief Secretary has stated his views as a private Member, and for the hon. Member, after the Debate has begun to draw to a close, to move the Adjournment of the Debate in order to allow the right hon. Member to have the opportunity of reconsidering his views would be an abuse of the rules of the House. [*Cheers*].

Mr. T. M. HEALY: On the point of order, Sir. There are five or six clauses remaining to be discussed, and there is a very important Debate coming on. We shall be entitled to discuss every one of those clauses unless the Motion for Adjournment be carried.

Mr. T. HARRINGTON said the promoters of the Bill were anxious that the Vote should be taken on the Bill as it stood. The proceedings would be regulated by the Vote of this clause. No further discussion would be necessary.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Further discussion will be necessary; and I shall discuss the other clauses.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: I have no business to consider what action will be taken on the subsequent clauses. I can only say that this Motion for the Adjournment is an abuse of the rules of the House.

Question put. The House divided:—Ayes, 178; Noes, 152.—(Division List, No. 153.)

Bill to be read the Third time.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL.

On the Order for Second Reading of this Bill,

Sir F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge), who had an Amendment on the Paper — that the Bill be read a Second time this day six months—said he opposed the Bill on the ground that, if carried, it would have a disastrous effect on the development of Uxbridge and the district. The line was not promoted for the benefit of local traffic, but was part of a scheme by the Great Western to try to obtain London traffic from the London and North Western Railway. The present main line from London to Swindon and Oxford passed 2½ miles on one side of the town, and the new line would pass 2½ miles on the other side, so that Uxbridge would be placed in a hole between two main lines. The place had never had a chance of having its traffic developed, and now it would be entirely ruined. There was, he contended, no real reason for the route of the proposed line; by coming near Uxbridge the gradients would be bettered instead of worsened, and the cost would be not much greater, while, such as it was, it would be easily recouped by the additional traffic they would obtain from Uxbridge and the district. The district they proposed to bring in was entirely an agricultural district. The policy of the Great Western had always been to destroy all local traffic if possible, and never to develop it under any circumstances whatever. He had in his hand a remarkable report brought to the London County Council in regard to the manner in which the Great Western were accustomed to deal with suburban traffic in the neighbourhood of London. It stated that there was much cause for dissatisfaction with the utterly inadequate service given by the Great Western Railway in districts through which it runs, and that it had been evident for years past that this had acted as a powerful check to the development of districts compared with the other parts of suburban London. That report was dated 1892, and since that time they had not put one solitary workmen's train on their line. That showed the feeling of the district with regard to the working of the Great Western Railway Company. When the scheme was propounded it was taken up in Uxbridge, and at a large meeting, attended by about a thousand persons, representing every class and interest, held in the Town Hall, at which he himself presided, a unanimous vote was passed as to the way in which the fares at Uxbridge were inserted and the manifest inconvenience caused. At High Wycombe a meeting was also held, where it was stated that the chair industry upon which the town lived might be destroyed, and the town thereby injured. An important meeting was also held at Gerard's Cross, at which it was stated that the line would be most inconvenient to the inhabitants. He did not wish to press his Motion to a Division, but he was anxious that the question should be brought fairly before the Committee.

Bill Read a Second time, and committed.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST).

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): To call attention to the grievance of the Officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions; and to move, That a Select Committee of this House be appointed to inquire into their case. —[Tuesday, 27th April.]

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST).

CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS (Devon, Torquay): To call attention to the grievance of the Officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions; and to move, That a Select Committee of this House be appointed to inquire into their case.—[Tuesday, 27th April.]

Sir F. Dixon-Hartland.

HABITUAL OFFENDERS (SCOTLAND).

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): To call attention to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders (Scotland); and to move a Resolution.—[Tuesday, 27th April.

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH).

CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the remarkable variations in the ratios of admissions into hospital from venereal diseases occurring between the various garrison towns in India, as revealed in the recent memorandum of the Army Sanitary Commission and the Report of the Departmental Committee; and, whether, in view of the important bearing of these variations upon any proposals that may be made for checking these diseases, he will order an inquiry to be made into their cause or causes either in one or two selected cases or over the whole of the garrisons in India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Gentleman will see from the Dispatch which will be in the hands of Members on Thursday morning that I have already directed the Government of India to institute an inquiry of the nature suggested.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (TUNBRIDGE WELLS).

MR. A. S. T. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can now state if an inquiry is to be held into the alleged inefficiency and costliness of the telephone service at Tunbridge Wells. Whether such inquiry will be a public inquiry; Whether opportunity will be given to the members of the local telephone committee, and other persons interested of giving evidence; and, whether the inquiry will be held by an official of the Post Office or by some independent person chosen for the purpose?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): Yes Sir. It is proposed to hold such an inquiry, and I assume without delay. As in other cases where a *primâ facie* case of inefficiency is shown, it will be a public inquiry at which the persons most interested will be heard, and it will be conducted by some independent person with legal or professional qualifications.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. LIONEL HOLLAND (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will postpone taking any action in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on Post Office Establishments, until an opportunity has been given in the House of Commons for discussion upon the subject; and, whether he will take any steps to ascertain the views of the various classes of Post Office servants upon those recommendations of the Committee which affect them?

Mr. HANBURY: I do not see any reason for delaying the enjoyment of the considerable advantages which Post Office servants will enjoy as the result of the recommendations of the Committee and the decision of the Treasury until the Report has been discussed here, which can hardly be till after Easter. The time fixed for the commencement of the increased payments is the beginning of the new financial year, and the delay of even a month would involve a loss to the officials concerned of about £12,000. The views of the various classes affected have of course already been fully stated before the Committee.

Mr. HOLLAND: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General whether, in view of the fact that no mention has been made in the recommendations of the Committee on Post Office establishments of the original class of tube attendants employed at the Central Telegraph Office, he could state what the future position and prospects for promotion of 50 or so members of this class of postal servants will be; or whether they could be given the option of being transferred to the position of sorters, as in the case of the tube attendants transferred to the sorters' class in August 1892.

Mr. HANBURY: It is not the fact that no mention is made in the Committee's Report of the class of tube attendants referred to by the hon. Member, the Committee having recommended that after four years' service, they should have the right to absorption into the postmen's class. It is understood that most of these officers would be ineligible for the situation of sorter. They have indeed all had the opportunity of competing for it.

Mr. E. HUBBARD (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been drawn to the special claims of the submarine telegraphists, as stated on page 14 of the Report of Lord Tweedmouth's Commission; and whether the Government intend to bring in a short Bill, as suggested in that Report allowing these officers to count service for pension since the year 1870.

Mr. HANBURY: My attention—as Secretary to the Treasury—has been called to these claims, which have I think some foundation, and the best way of dealing with them is now being considered.

LONDON WATER SUPPLY (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Mr. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the London Water Commission?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The terms of the reference are as follows:—(1) To inquire and report whether, having regard to financial considerations and to present and prospective requirements as regards water supply in the districts within the limits of supply of the metropolitan water companies, it is desirable, in the interests of the ratepayers and water consumers in those districts, that the undertakings of the water companies should be acquired and managed either (*a*) by one authority, or (*b*) by several authorities, and, if so, what should be such authority or authorities; to what extent physical severance of the works and other property and sources of supply of the several companies, and the division thereof between different local authorities within the limits of supply, are practicable and desirable, and what are the legal powers necessary to give effect to any such arrangements; (2) if the undertakings are not so acquired, whether additional powers of control should be exercised by local or other authorities, and, if so, what those powers should be; (3) whether it is practicable to connect any two or more of the different systems of supply now administered by the eight metropolitan companies, and, if so, by whom and in what proportions should the cost of connecting them be borne, and what are the legal powers necessary to give effect to any such arrangement?

MR. HARRY MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's-in-the-East) asked when the Metropolitan Water Consumers Bill would be introduced?

MR. CHAPLIN: That Bill will be introduced, I hope, as soon as I see a reasonable prospect of proceeding with it, but I do not think there is any chance of my seeing that prospect before Easter.

KINGSTOWN HARBOUR (BOAT ACCIDENTS).

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that some years since two men named Doyle, and a steward, and an officer's servant, of H.M.S. *Belleisle*, were drowned in crossing from the Victoria Wharf to the *Belleisle*, which was then guardship in Kingstown Harbour; also the two brothers of the afore-mentioned Doyles, together with Ship Surgeon Gibbons, were recently drowned crossing from the same wharf to the ship *Jason*; whether an inquiry was held by the Naval Authorities regarding those disasters; and whether any precautions have been taken to avoid those preventible accidents by the more effectual supervision of boats plying for hire, especially at night? The hon. Member also asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that at an inquest held at Kingstown some years since on the bodies of the brothers Doyle, boatmen, and two men of H.M.S. *Belleisle*, who were drowned while crossing from the Victoria Wharf to that ship, the Coroner's jury recommended that one of the harbour constables or an authorised watchman should be on duty at night while boats were plying for hire, and whether such recommendation was carried into effect; and whether arrangements will be made to have a harbour constable or other watchman on duty until 12.30 at night?

MR. HANBURY: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer these questions, as the Commissioners of Public Works are also the Harbour Authorities at Kingstown. I understand that the two accidents occurred as stated—the *Belleisle* case on the night of the 1st February 1892, and the *Jason* case on the night of the 13th instant. The question as to inquiries by the Naval Authorities should more properly be addressed to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty. I understand, however, that such an inquiry was held on the *Jason* case, with the result that the accident was ascribed, perhaps in part to the boat being overladen, but mainly to her being unseaworthy. In the *Belleisle* case the Coroner's jury did not recommend the appointment of a night watchman as stated in the question. They did recommend that there should be life-buoys placed on the east pier, and this was done. In the *Jason* case they merely brought in a verdict of accidental death. The question was referred to me too late to allow me to obtain a report from the Board of Works, but I see from the Harbour bye-laws that every boat plying for hire must be licensed by the Commissioners to carry a given number of passengers, and must be kept in good condition to the satisfaction of the Harbour-master. I have instructed the Commissioners to report as to the steps taken to enforce these regulations, and also as to the question of having a watchman on night duty.

COUNTY COURT PROCEDURE (IRELAND).

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill on an early date dealing with the reform of the County Court procedure in Ireland, seeing that legislation on this subject has been promised for the past 15 years, and that during that time practically nothing has been done to remedy matters; and, whether, in view of the fact that the Lord Chancellor, with five County Court colleagues, met a deputation of traders from the Dublin Mercantile Association in 1895, expressed sympathy with the views submitted to them, and promised to give them consideration with a view of introducing a Bill into Parliament, he will state if anything has been done in the matter since?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): The Lord Chancellor and Committee of County Court Judges met a deputation of the Dublin Mercantile Association in 1895, and discussed with them various matters in connection with County Court procedure, more especially as regards the more frequent sittings of the Recorder of Dublin, and in this respect the views of the deputation have been met by the appointment of three additional sittings of the Dublin Civil Bill Court each year. Arrangements are also being made for more frequent sittings of the Recorder of Belfast. As regards other matters discussed, the Lord Chancellor and the County Court Judges were by no means in accord with many of the views expressed by the Deputation, and I am not aware that any prospect of further legislation on those matters was then held out.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (HOUSEHOLD TROOPS).

Mr. E. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Bradford (Captain Greville), I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, having regard to the heavy additional exhaustive duties which necessarily devolve on the Household Troops, both cavalry and infantry, in furnishing extra guards, sentries, and escorts during the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, together with the long hours of street duty on the 22nd June, he can see his way to mark this auspicious occasion by granting some small pecuniary emolument to the troops so engaged as compensation for the extra duties and the wear and tear of uniform thereby entailed?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The Household Troops, whose especial duty it is to provide guards and escorts on the occasion of Court ceremonies, are already in receipt of higher pay than other corps in corresponding arms of the service, and it is not proposed, therefore, to make any special distinction between the allowances issued to Household and to other troops on June 22.

BELFAST LUNATIC ASYLUM (DEATH OF INMATE).

Mr. G. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland with reference to the inquiry into the case of Mrs. Beggs, whose ribs and breast bone were found broken after her death in the Belfast Lunatic Asylum, whether he can now state the result of the Inquiry; whether any physical examination of her was made after her admission to the asylum, and if so, on what date, by whom, and what entry of it was made; and if he will say on what date the straight waistcoat was placed upon her, and if her ribs and breast bone were broken before or after that time?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The report of the Inspectors of Lunatics who held an Inquiry at the Belfast District Asylum into the circumstances attending the death of Jane Beggs deals with the matter at considerable length, and was communicated yesterday to the Board of Governors of the Asylum. A superficial physical examination of this woman was made by the Assistant Medical Officer of the Asylum on the day after her admission, viz., the 6th January. She was also examined on the same date by the Resident Medical Superintendent. On the 8th January a further examination was made by the Visiting Physician. The result of the examination by the Assistant Medical Officer on the 6th inst. was as follows:—State of bodily health, healthy; heart, sound; lungs, sound; bruises on legs, arms, and sides, small scars in same positions, œdema of hands and ankles. The straight waistcoat was put on on the 6th January and was taken off on the 8th January. The Inspectors have not been able to ascertain definitely whether deceased's ribs and breast bone were broken before or after that time, though in their opinion the weight of evidence favours the presumption that they were broken before that time.

LAND COMMISSION.

MR. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of fair rent applications received from the Counties of Down and Antrim respectively, and still remaining unheard?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: In County Down 1,538 applications have been received which have not yet been listed. The applications on the current lists, now with the Sub-Commission for disposal, comprise 517 cases, and these cases are in various stages of progress. In the County Antrim there are 1,267 applications unlisted, and 323 cases have been listed for hearing, which will shortly be commenced.

MR. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Land Commission has been directed to the cases of the tenants at Fearnaught, near Dromod, South Leitrim, who purchased their holdings some years ago from their landlord; whether he is aware that they have been paying each year three-fourths of the purchase money to the Land Commission and one-fourth to the landlord, and that the landlord has attempted to make the instalments payable to him a perpetual charge on their holdings; and whether he can state what steps the Land Commission are prepared to take to have the ownership of these holdings transferred to the purchasing tenants?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The sales referred to were carried out under the Purchase Clauses of the Land Law Act 1881, under which not more than three-fourths of the price could be advanced by the Land Commission. Advances of that amount were made on the 4th December 1882 to 20 tenants on an estate comprising the townland mentioned. These advances are now being paid by annuities calculated at the rate of 4 per cent. on the advance. The annuities have in all said cases been paid up to date. One-fourth of the

Mr. Gerald Balfour.

purchase money in each case was secured to vendor by mortgage charged on the holdings. This was quite regular. The ownership was vested in the tenant purchasers, but subject to the mortgages referred to.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rent fixed by the Sub-Commissioners on the farm of Mr. W. J. Cuthbert, at Culmore, was raised from £79 15s. to £96 16s. by the Commission, on the report of the court valuer, the court valuer giving as his reason its proximity to a railway station, though at the Culmore station there is no siding or other means of loading agricultural produce; and, whether he will call the attention of the Land Commission to the desirability of considering in similar cases whether the station is in fact of any use for the carriage of agricultural produce?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The only holdings of W. J. Cuthbert which came before the Land Commission at their recent sitting at Londonderry were two holdings on which rents fixed at £13 15s. and £66 by the Sub-commission, were raised by the Land Commissioners to £15 6s. and £81 10s. respectively. In neither of these cases is there any reference to any proximity to a railway station at Culmore in the court valuer's report.

CIVIL SERVICE (SECOND DIVISION CLERKS).

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state how many clerks of the Second Division, lower grade, have been deprived, on grounds other than inefficiency, of promotion to the higher grade on their reaching salaries of £250 per annum; whether any clerks so dealt with have been subsequently employed in the performance of higher grade duties during the time the superior position and pay have been withheld from them; whether the heads of departments periodically review the cases of such clerks with a view of satisfying themselves that their promotion is not being unduly delayed; and what means exist (if any) under the system of automatic vacancies of promoting such clerks?

Mr. HANBURY: The Question appears to rest on a misapprehension. There is no right of succession from the lower to the higher grade of the Second Division. As often as a clerk reaches by increments a salary of £250 a promotion is made to the higher grade, but the Order in Council requires that such promotion must be made on the ground of positive merit, and not seniority. On each occasion the claims of the whole Second Division staff are necessarily reviewed by the head of the Department, with whom, and not with the Treasury, the promotion rests. I am not aware of any case in which a clerk, after being refused advancement to the higher grade, has been required to perform duties peculiar to that Grade.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if effectual means have been adopted to carry out the two reforms in Scotch prison administration urged upon Lord Balfour of Burleigh by a deputation of chief officers of Scotch gaols more than a year ago, namely, firstly, the levelling-up of the salaries of the governors, medical officers, chaplains and others to the scale of remuneration paid to similar functionaries in English and Irish prisons; and secondly, an increase of the inadequate staff of warders, especially in view of the association in some prisons of weak-minded prisoners with other criminals and without due supervision?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): In connection with the Prison Estimates for 1897–98, the Secretary for Scotland made certain proposals to the Treasury in regard to the medical officers, the chaplains, and the warders in Scottish prisons. The Treasury sanctioned his proposals as regards the appointment of two additional medical officers, but refused the increased pay to the chaplains on the grounds stated by the Secretary to the Treasury on the 25th instant, in reply to the hon. Member for the Ayr Burghs. The recommended increase of seven permanent male warders and four occasional female warders was sanctioned.

COUNTY CAVAN MILITIA.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether in future the County Cavan Militia are to be sent for annual training purposes to County Donegal; on what grounds this change has been decided upon; whether he is aware that the men proposed to be so transferred are many of them labourers employed in the neighbourhood of Cavan, to whom the change will mean a loss of employment for the rest of the season after disbanding; and, whether the order can now be revoked?

Mr. BRODRICK: The 4th battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers, will be trained this year at Ballyshannon, as there is no range near its headquarters where it can fire with safety, and also for the advantage of being brigaded with other Militia battalions. Its future place of training must depend on where a suitable range becomes available. It is not understood how training at Ballyshannon can interfere with the men's employment during the non-training period; and the present order could not be revoked without sacrificing the efficiency of the battalion.

POOR LAW UNION (IRELAND).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, when he proposes to introduce the Bill for the amalgamation of Poor Law Unions in Ireland; and, does he propose to refer the Bill to the Standing Committee or to the Committee of the whole House?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I hope to introduce the Bill some day before the Easter Recess provided I am able to do so after Twelve o'clock. The Bill is one which should be referred, after Second Reading, to the Standing Committee on Law.

PRISON VANS (COUNTIES).

Mr. JOHN HUTTON (Yorkshire, Richmond): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many county prisons are supplied with prison vans for the conveyance of prisoners; and, whether he will direct the Prison Commissioners to supply such vans to all prisons, so as to avoid the necessity of obliging unconvicted and convicted prisoners, male and female, to walk handcuffed and chained from the railway stations to the prisons?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Thirty-three out of the 56 local prisons are supplied with vans, and in all cases of conveyance of prisoners for which the Prison Commissioners are responsible, with only a few exceptions, the prisoners are conveyed either in these vans or in vehicles hired for the purpose. The few exceptions referred to, in which prisoners walk, are cases in which the distance is a few yards only. Possibly the cases which the hon. Member has in his mind are cases for which the Prison Commissioners are not responsible, but the police.

GUN LICENCE (BALLYBUNION, COUNTY KERRY).

MR. M. J. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that John H. Danagher applied for a gun licence at the Petty Sessions held in Ballybunion, County Kerry, on 14th August last; and that during the hearing of the application the Resident Magistrate used language impugning the character of applicant; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is a fact that John H. Danagher applied to the Resident Magistrate for a licence to keep a gun and that the application was not acceded to. I have already stated that the granting or withholding an arms licence is vested by law in the Resident Magistrate, who is the licensing officer of the district, and having made inquiry into the facts of the present case I am satisfied that the Resident Magistrate exercised the discretion conferred upon him in this matter in a reasonable manner. When the Resident Magistrate was requested by applicant to give his reason for withholding the licence, he stated it was on account of an outrage committed on the servant of the man who had taken the farm from which applicant had been evicted.

Mr. John Hutton.

CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what steps he will take, in establishing the proposed central poor law authority for sick children in the Metropolis, to compensate the Guardians of Shoreditch for the large expenditure they have undertaken with the sanction of the Local Government Board for the treatment at the cottage homes at Hornchurch of children suffering from ophthalmia and other diseases now proposed to be treated by the Central Board?

MR. CHAPLIN: The Local Government Board are aware that the Guardians of the parish of Shoreditch have two cottages in connection with their cottage homes at Hornchurch in which children suffering from ophthalmia and skin disease have been placed. These cottages are not necessarily occupied by children of the classes referred to. When the Guardians proposed their erection they stated that they would be available for sick or healthy children as might be required. According to a return obtained last month, the Guardians had in the cottage for children suffering from skin disease 24 patients, and the accommodation was fully occupied. Apart from infirmary accommodation, the schools are already full, and the increased accommodation is already needed. Seven patients were occupying the cottage for ophthalmic cases, which provides accommodation for 24 children. The educational arrangements for the children are not satisfactory, and when the cases referred to are removed as proposed, the Guardians will have available for other children the accommodation thus set free. There is not in my opinion any ground for compensation in the case. Under the scheme prepared by the Local Government Board, there would be provided an additional ordinary cottage home for 24 children, which is now utilised for seven ophthalmic cases. We are not aware precisely to what extent there is vacant accommodation in the school, but if there is any such accommodation, there are Guardians of other Unions who would be willing to avail themselves of it and pay for the accommodation.

SEAL LIFE (NORTH PACIFIC).

Mr. H. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Report of the Mission of Inquiry into Seal Life in the North Pacific of 1896 has yet been received; whether it is in contemplation now to frame new international regulations for preservation of seal life in the North Pacific; and whether such regulations before adoption will be submitted to the Government of the Canadian Dominion, and to those who have expert knowledge of the whole question?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): The Reports of the British Commissioners have been received and are under examination; it is thought that some modification of the existing regulations may be found desirable at the end of 1898, the period fixed by the Arbitration Tribunal for their reconsideration: no revised Regulations will be adopted without previous communication with the Dominion Government.

CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to make such structural alterations in the Custom House, Dublin, as will destroy the beauty of the southern portico of the building by closing the arches; whether he is aware that the Custom House is much prized by the citizens of Dublin as one of the best specimens of architecture in the city, and that there is a strong and universal feeling against the proposed alterations; and whether, before allowing any alterations to be made, he will take time to fully inform himself of the views of the citizens of Dublin on this matter, and be guided in his decision by their opinion?

Mr. HANBURY: There will be no structural alterations which will destroy the beauty of the southern portico. I have the drawings and plans in my room, and shall be very glad to show them to the hon. Member.

CRETE.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) what precautions the Government have taken to insure that the Christian peasantry of Crete shall not be subjected to famine by the blockade; and (2) on what grounds the Government justify the 3rd Article of the Proclamation, which forbids the landing of provisions for the interior of the island, while no restriction is placed on the landing of provisions and stores for the use of those cities where the Mahommedan population and the Turkish troops are congregated?

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, I wish to ask whether the Cretan insurgents, the so-called Christians—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"]—have robbed the Mussulman population of their lands and their food; and whether a great majority of the Mussulman population in Crete are not at present exiled in the sea-coast towns, and in a state of semi-starvation?

*Mr. CURZON: It is true that the Mussulmans from the interior have been obliged to leave their villages and are in occupation of the ports upon the sea coast, and it is true also that in some cases destitution unfortunately prevails amongst them. The Admirals are fully alive to the possible necessities, as regards provisions, of the peaceful inhabitants of Crete, and, subject to the difficulties inherent in the situation, have arranged to distribute certain food supplies where most required.

Mr. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has not replied to the second paragraph of the Question.

*Mr. CURZON: I did not answer it because the hon. Gentleman has not quoted the 3rd Article of the Proclamation correctly. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Admirals are acting on their own responsibility, or in obedience to instructions from their respective Governments, in preventing the landing of arms intended for Greeks and Cretans, whilst allowing the landing of arms intended for Turks?

*Mr. CURZON: The Admirals are acting in accordance with the authority given to them by their respective Governments to take the measures which they may think expedient for restoring order in Crete. The blockade naturally involves the prohibition of the landing of arms and munitions of war, if, in the opinion of the Admirals, they are likely to be employed for aggressive purposes or to prolong the fighting or disorder. The Admirals must use their discretion in relaxing this prohibition in cases where arms may be required for the defence of the towns under their protection. We have, however, heard of no arms being landed for the Turks.

MR. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether one Sami Pasha has been permitted by the Great Powers to land armed Turkish troops and ammunition recently in Crete?

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, I wish to ask whether the presence of the Turkish troops in the seaport towns of Crete is not necessary for the protection of the Mussulman refugees, and also for the safety of the Allied Forces. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. CURZON: It is a little difficult to answer such a question without notice. In answer to the Question on the Paper, Her Majesty's Consul reported by telegraph on the 27th instant that Vice Admiral Sami Pasha had landed at Canea, with provisions and ammunition, but not, as suggested in the Question, with troops.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether the Government have received from Rear Admiral Harris an official account of the bombardment by the international fleet of the blockhouse at Malaxa; (2) whether, when the fleet opened fire, hostilities between the Cretans and the Turkish troops had ceased, the ruins being crowded with both Cretans and Turks, so that the bombardment at that time might have resulted in the most serious loss of life; (3) whether the shelling of the position was ordered as a punitive measure, or in ignorance of the real state of affairs at Malaxa at the time; and (4) whether Admiral Harris was fired upon when returning from Akrotiri from a snipe-shooting expedition shortly after the bombardment? In putting the Question, Mr. Roberts said the first two paragraphs were replied to yesterday after he had put his Question down.

*MR. CURZON: I gave to the House yesterday the whole of the information that we have received from the Admiral on this subject. With regard to the last paragraph, Her Majesty's Consul telegraphed on the 29th instant that Admiral Harris, while out shooting near Akrotiri on the 28th, was fired at at close range by the insurgents.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the ambassadors at Constantinople have received a telegram from the Admirals commanding the allied squadrons in Cretan waters stating that in their opinion the Turkish troops must be withdrawn from the island; that the details of the proposed scheme of autonomy should be immediately published, with a declaration that the Governor should be a European; and, if so, whether representations have been made to the Porte by the Powers with a view to carrying out the opinion of the Admirals?

*MR. CURZON: On the 25th instant the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople communicated to his colleagues a telegram from the Russian Admiral in Crete, urging on behalf of the combined Admirals that a European Governor General should be appointed, with full powers and the necessary funds, and that the Porte should be asked gradually to withdraw their troops as the Admirals judged necessary. These recommendations have the entire support of Her Majesty's Government, who have lost no opportunity of urging their importance. They are at the present moment under the consideration of the Powers.

*CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice, namely, whether it is the case that the British Admiral in Cretan waters has telegraphed asking for a further dispatch to Crete of an additional battalion of 600 men, and that, if this is correct and the Government intend to comply with the request, whether, as the work to be carried out is entirely dictated by the policy of an English majority in this House, he will urge upon the Government to send an English battalion, and not a Scottish or

Irish one—[*Ministerial laughter and Opposition cheers*]—the national sentiment of the former—that is the English—assimilating better with the proposed action. [*Laughter.*]

MR. CARSON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, may I ask whether in this respect the Irish army is a separate entity. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. CURZON: If the hon. and gallant Member will put his Question on the Paper, I will endeavour to answer it. May I say on this point that really the practice of putting Foreign Office Questions by private notice has lately acquired a very considerable and unreasonable latitude—["hear, hear"]—and I hope the House will support me in declining to encourage it. [*Cheers.*]

*CAPTAIN PIRIE: I beg to apologise to the right hon. Gentleman, but I must say this is the first time I have put a Question after private notice.

POST OFFICE SERVANTS (SUPERANNUATION).

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if the regulations of the Department admit of no superannuation for faithful servants grown too old for the service, and if there is no such fund provided by deduction from pay in younger days with Departmental aid applicable to the case of Michael Mally, who, after twenty-five years' service as postman between Tulla and Ballinahinch, County Clare, finds himself discharged by reason of advanced years with a grant of £5 only from the Rowland Hill Fund?

MR. HANBURY: In accordance with the Superannuation Acts, pensions or gratuities can be awarded to those only whose duties have required that their whole time should be given to the public service, and there is no fund provided by deduction from pay of Post Office servants such as the hon. Member describes. Michael Mally was not, it seems, required to give his whole time to the service, and was paid during his twenty-five years' service out of an allowance to the Postmaster to provide for a delivery of letters. It is feared, therefore, that his case will not come within the scope of the Acts, but some further inquiry is being made on the subject.

PARCEL TRAFFIC (ENGLAND AND AMERICA).

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that the American Postal Regulations give express authority for the sending of live bees in wooden boxes, closed with a wire screen and protected by a movable wooden lid, as samples of merchandise to the British Colonies in Australia, to Canada, British India, to every country in Europe (except Great Britain, Russia, and Turkey), to the South American Republics, and to the Colonies of Spain and the Netherlands; and, having regard to the fact that Mr. Hewitt, the bee fancier of Sheffield, only desires like facilities for the dispatch to British Colonies of the queen or mother bees he breeds, and not for a swarm, whether the matter can be reconsidered under similar precautions against the danger of the escape of such queens into a mail bag?

MR. HANBURY: My hon. and gallant Friend has slightly overstated the case; but it is true that several countries as well as the British Colonies which he mentions admit live bees by post from the United States. There is, however, a rule of long standing in the British postal service that living things should not be sent by post; and if an exception is once made to the general rule, it is obvious that it might be necessary to extend that exception to animals less innocuous than a stingless queen bee. But the Postmaster General will take the opportunity which the Question affords him of considering whether it is desirable to maintain or modify the rule, and, if so, in what way.

VOLUNTEER CAMPS (ALDERSHOT).

COLONEL DALBIAC (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if it has been decided to deprive the Metropolitan Volunteers of the advantages derived for many years past of training at Aldershot with the Regular Forces in the August Bank Holiday week, in provisional and other battalions; and, if so, on what ground this decision has been arrived at, and if it can be reconsidered?

MR. BRODRICK: Eleven battalions of the Metropolitan Volunteers have applied to go to Aldershot in August and all will be allowed to train there if the claims of corps from other parts of the country make it possible to accede to their applications.

ALLOTMENTS ACTS.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, with regard to the acquisition by parish councils of land by compulsory purchase in proceedings under the Allotment Acts, whether it is the case that a large amount of work has been thrown upon the Local Government Board in prescribing by order the details of the procedure with regard to preliminary notices, local inquiry, and many such matters; whether orders were made after much consideration prescribing the adaptations of the Allotments Acts, and, in the case of compulsory hiring of land for allotments, the adaptation of the Lands Clauses Acts; and in how many cases, since the issue of the series of Orders in May 1885 to every parish, district, and county council, the provisions thus carefully considered have been put in force with regard to the compulsory purchase of land, and in how many with regard to the compulsory hiring of land for allotments?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The answer to the first and second Questions is in the affirmative. No Order for compulsory purchase of land for allotments, under Section 9 of the Local Government Act 1894, has been deposited for confirmation with the Local Government Board. As regards Orders for compulsory hiring of land for allotments, 27 in all have been deposited with the Board. Of these, 12 have been confirmed, 2 have been disallowed, 6 have been found invalid, 1 has been allowed to drop, and 6 are under consideration.

LAND LAW IRELAND ACT 1896 (RULES).

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the rules provided for in Sub-section (2) of Section 25 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896, have yet been issued?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The rules referred to have not yet been made.

Mr. DILLON: I am given to understand that calculations have been made in some cases and notified to tenants. How can that be unless the rules have been made?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The rules have not been made.

ARMY DESERTERS.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, according to the Return of the Inspector General of Recruiting, the number of deserters was 3,357 for last year; if his attention has been called to the case of the man who admitted enlisting and deserting from the East Yorkshire and fourteen other corps in succession; and whether, owing to the prevalence of this practice, he will consider the possibility of marking, by vaccination or otherwise, every officer and private on joining the Army?

Mr. BRODRICK: The number of deserters in 1896 was only 1,819, which is a fairer criterion than the number of desertions. Such a case as that referred to is mentioned in a magazine as having occurred apparently 13 years ago, but the references are too vague to be traced. The practice of marking was deliberately abandoned; and as the loss by desertion is shown to be annually decreasing there is no present ground for seeking to re-introduce it.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (COMMEMORATION MEDAL).

Mr. R. T. HERMON-HODGE (Oxon, Henley): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the advisability of issuing a Jubilee shilling which shall serve the purpose of a commemorative medal and at the same time pass as current coin; or, if not, whether he will cause the proposed Jubilee medals to be issued in two sizes?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): It has been decided to issue in reduced size copies of the medal to be struck in commemoration of the completion of the 60th year of the Queen's reign. Due notice will be given in the newspapers of the price at which they will be obtainable, which will be fixed as near cost price as possible, together with full information as to the steps to be taken in order to procure them. There will be no issue before the month of June.

ESTATE DUTY (LATE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA).

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is a fact that the late Emperor of Russia had, on his death, large sums at the Bank of England, and that the Estate Duty was not paid on these moneys; and whether, in the case of Sovereigns having moneys in this country on death, no Estate Duty is paid on them; and, if so, could he explain to the House the grounds of such exemption?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The matter referred to has been fully explained to the Public Accounts Committee, who will, I presume, make a report upon it if they think fit. As it happened in the time of my predecessor, I think, if the hon. Member still finds it necessary to ask a Question on it in the meantime, he had better wait till the Member for West Monmouthshire returns to his place, which we all hope may be soon.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (MEMBERS AND PRIVATE SECRETARIES).

MR. C. W. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it is by his directions that notices have been posted on the doors of two rooms hitherto set apart for the use of Members and their private secretaries, stating that they are now to be used for conferences only, that this leaves only one room for Members and their secretaries, and that one room is quite inadequate for Members and their private secretaries; and whether he can arrange to provide other accommodation either for conferences or for Members and their secretaries?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. A. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): My answer to the first inquiry of my hon. Friend is in the negative. I do not think that any additional accommodation can at present be provided for these purposes within the limits of the space at the disposal of the House; but I will bear in mind the need for further accommodation, and gladly meet it when in my power to do so.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is now in a position to state what provision will be made in the new time table for the acceleration of the mails between Dundalk and Enniskillen?

The HON. MEMBER further asked, whether any decision has yet been arrived at respecting the arrival and dispatch of mails between Enniskillen and Bundoran and the intervening district?

MR. HANBURY: As already explained in answer to previous Questions in the House, the Post Office would not be justified in calling upon the railway company to run a special train at the public cost from Dundalk to Enniskillen in connection with the day mail train from Dublin, and the same remark applies with even greater force to places beyond Enniskillen, such as Bundoran. The Secretary in Dublin has, however, been instructed to bring before the railway company the strong desire expressed by the inhabitants of the district for an improvement of their day mail service, in the hope that they may see their way to run a suitable train, but the Department has not yet been made acquainted with the decision of the company.

MONEY ORDERS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is prepared to reduce the cost on money orders not exceeding £1 from 3d. to 2d.; if so, how soon will the change be effected?

MR. HANBURY: I stated in this House on the 18th instant that the Government was prepared to make this change. I hope it will come into force on the 1st May.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (ENGLAND AND ISLE OF MAN).

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is a fact that an application has been made by the National Telephone Company for the use of the telegraph cable between England and Douglas, Isle of Man, for telephone purposes; whether he is aware that there is in the existing cable, which consists of five wires, two which are practically never used; whether a telephonic service could be arranged on those two unused wires without delay; and whether he is aware that the subscribers in the Isle of Man to the telephone service were promised that communication would be established at an early date with Great Britain?

MR. HANBURY: No such application can be traced. There are three wires in the existing cable, not five, and they are all used for telegraph business. Even if available, they would be quite unsuitable for a telephonic service. So far as the Postmaster General is aware, no promise of the kind described by the hon. Member has been made.

PORTUMNA RAILWAY.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that the Portumna derelict railway cost over £100,000 to construct; and (2) whether the Government will give a grant of £37,000 to re-equip the line and clear it of incumbrance?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand that the cost of construction of this line was £80,000, of which the sum of £12,000 was advanced by the Public Works Loan Commissioners. This loan has never been repaid. As regards the second paragraph, I have already informed the hon. Member that in no circumstances can the Government, under the Act of last year, contribute more than one-half of the cost of re-constructing the line, which has been estimated at £24,000.

JUDICIARY (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in accordance with his pledge that any Irish savings will be credited to Ireland, the amount of the savings made by not filling up the existing vacancy in the Irish Judicial Bench will be paid to an Irish account; what was the amount of saving to the Treasury in Irish judicial retrenchments since 1875; and will such amount be also brought to a special Irish account for redistribution on Irish services?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: My statement was not retrospective, and referred to judicial and legal expenditure. I had in my mind the present vacancy on the Irish Bench, and possibly others. Legislation would be necessary, and my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland proposes to introduce a Bill on the subject.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the saving that is now going on from day to day be paid to the credit of an Irish account?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I cannot answer that.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (WATER SUPPLY).

SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will agree to the Return of the amount expended by the London County Council on negotiations and inquiries with respect to the purchase of the London Water Companies which stands on the Paper this day?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am not aware of an objection to this request, and I shall be willing to agree to the Return.

TULLAMORE GAOL.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he will inquire as to the condition of health, dietary, and general treatment of a man named John Smith, who was confined in Tullamore Goal for a month, was released on the 26th ultimo, and died nine days after, as alleged, from the effects of diarrhœa brought on by bread and water diet while in prison; and whether he has any objection to give the medical officer's record of the result of his examination of this man's condition of health on his reception, and at subsequent examinations, with the dietary ordered, whether in hospital or not?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have made inquiry into this case, and have no reason to believe that the allegation in the first paragraph is accurate. I am willing to supply the hon. Member with a copy of the medical records, if he desires it.

ARREST FOR DRUNKENNESS (OMAGH).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of a young man named John Gormely, who was arrested for alleged drunkenness in the streets of Omagh on the 19th ultimo, and brought before two local Justices on the following morning without notice to Gormely's father, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment; whether, seeing that the Petty Sessions of Omagh were held on the 22nd ultimo, he will explain why Gormely was not summoned to appear there, or before a Resident Magistrate, instead of being thus tried in camera; whether it is usual for local Justices to deal with police charges in private within two days of the sitting of local Petty Sessions Court, and give such sentences as three months; and, whether he will advise the police authorities of Omagh to have recourse to the Petty Sessions with such cases in future?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The prisoner, who is an old offender, and who absconded on previous occasions when summoned to Petty Sessions, was arrested in his father's presence for being drunk and disorderly. Gormely assaulted the police on the same occasion. He was sentenced to one month's imprisonment on the first charge, and to two month's imprisonment for assault on the police. Before sentence, his family, when requested to supply him with clean linen, refused to do so, alleging, as a reason, that he had previously assaulted his father, mother and brothers. The case was heard in the Petty Sessions Office at the Court House, to which the public had access, and was not heard in camera. Cases of drunkenness and disorderly conduct have been similarly disposed of on market day held on Saturday, though the Petty Sessions are held on Monday, and where it is known that the accused would not appear if summoned.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Did the right hon. Gentleman approve of this system?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must not discuss the matter.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman order in future that these questions will be brought before the petty sessions, and not tried by a private tribunal?

[No answer was given.]

INSURANCE OF POOR PERSONS.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he is aware that, in the case of the death of poor people in many big towns of England, whose relatives have insured them for the purpose of getting a small sum for burial uses, it is the custom of the insurance agents to call upon the friends of deceased, and, having represented to them the delay for inquiry and certifying purposes which must take place before a payment is made, offer them a sum much smaller than the amount insured for in satisfaction of the full amount of the policy; and that in most cases, owing to their poverty and the necessity for an early funeral, these people frequently commute their claims for a small sum paid down; and whether some steps, by legislation or otherwise, will be taken by the Law Officers of the Crown to put a stop to this practice?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight): I have no information respecting the practice referred to in the Question of the hon. Member. It does not seem to me a matter which can be dealt with by legislation or legal proceedings. If the hon. Member will communicate to me any specific case, I shall be glad to consider whether any action can be taken.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS (QUESTIONS).

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury which Minister of the Crown is responsible, in the absence from the country of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and of the Prime Minister, for the answers given in the House of Commons to Questions upon Foreign Affairs?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I am rather surprised that a gentleman of the right hon. Member's experience should ask a question such as he has put on the Paper. Of course, in the first instance, my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary is responsible for the answers which he gives, and no man is more capable or qualified to bear that responsibility. [*Ministerial cheers.*] In the second place, the Government of which my right hon. Friend is a Member is responsible for his action, as it is for all other actions of those who compose it. I hope that answer will satisfy the right hon. Gentleman, whose knowledge of Parliamentary traditions I should have thought might have saved him from putting such a question. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of any occasion within this century when the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were together out of the country. [*Laughter.*] And is he not aware that on such important matters as those with which we are dealing it is usual for the House of Commons to have its information given on the direct authority and the responsible authority of a Cabinet Minister? [*Opposition cheers.*]

*SIR C. DILKE: Is it not the case that when the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were absent during negotiations for the Treaty of Berlin the Secretary of State for the Home Department, the present Lord Cross, acted as Secretary of Foreign Affairs in their absence?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, I believe it is true that Lord Cross did on that occasion sign the Dispatches, as one Secretary of State may always do in the absence of another Secretary of State. I do not see, however, how that is relevant to the present issue.

MR. J. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): May I ask as a person of Parliamentary inexperience—[*laughter*]—in reference to this matter whether the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs is a Minister of the Crown at all? Is he a Minister of the Cabinet, or is he the personal appointment of Lord Salisbury?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! These inquiries are travelling some distance from the original Question.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. J. MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury what business will be taken on Thursday, and can he indicate to us the general course which will be taken next week?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: As regards Thursday, the first business will be the Military Works Loans Bill. The second business will be the conclusion of the Debate and the proceedings connected with the Second Reading and the reference to a Committee of the Scottish Public Health Bill. The third business will be the Military Lands Bill. As regards Monday, I cannot at present give a definite reply, but my hope is that on that day the resolution authorising the Bill to deal with poor School Board districts will be the first order. [*Cheers.*]

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): To what sort of committee does the right hon. Gentleman propose to refer the Scottish Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Grand Committee on Law.

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND (FINANCIAL RELATIONS.)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY moved—

> "That the order for resuming the adjourned Debate on Financial relations (England and Ireland) have precedence this day and to-morrow of the notices of Motions and of the other Orders of the day."

*SIR C. DILKE protested against this further encroachment on the time of private Members. No word of notice or explanation of this Motion had been given to the House. He did not wish to make any personal grievance of this matter in regard to the taking of the following day, which was a Wednesday, but as regarded the principle, there had been increasing inroads on the Wednesdays, which properly belonged to private Members. In regard to Tuesdays, it might be said that private Members were themselves to blame for the encroachment of the Government, because of the large number of counts out which had taken place on Tuesday evenings. But private Members were not to blame, because there was so much uncertainty as to whether they were to have this time or not, and as to the subject which was to be considered. He instanced the Miners'

Eight Hours Bill as one in which a number of hon. Members were interested, and for which facilities should be given. Although he did not propose to divide the House, he must protest against this encroachment on the time of private Members.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he had expected that the First Lord would have offered some palliation for the onslaught he proposed to make on the time of the House. He entered his protest against the course adopted. He remembered no Session in which so many demands had been made for the time which belonged to private Members. That was done not in favour of a Government Bill, but in favour of another private Member's Motion. The Irish Members were entitled to the concession of proper time for the discussion of the Financial Relations Motion, but the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House ought not to have been generous at the expense of private Members, but ought to have made the concession out of Government time. In the second place, it seemed to him that the Motion was altogether unnecessary. The chief Government Bill of the Session had been disposed of, and, so far as he could see, there was nothing to make Government business pressing, and he therefore protested against the course now being taken as most unfair to private Members. There was one Motion down for to-night, which had aroused great interest among the working classes, calling for a codification of the laws relating to labour, and which he would have had the opportunity of moving only for the Motion now before the House. During the present Session and the last Session many classes in this country had their interests fully attended to by the Government. One class alone had had no opportunity of formulating its demands, and that was the largest class of all. It was but little consistent with the projects of social reform on which the Government, with its great majority, had come into power, that on the one occasion a representative of a working class constituency had the opportunity of putting forward a demand in favour of that class, he should have been set aside and deprived of his opportunity.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham), who had a Motion on the Paper that night to call attention to the grievance of the officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions, complained that it was only that morning he was able to obtain from the public Press a knowledge of the intentions of the Government in regard to the business for that night. But before the House decided upon this question, he thought they were entitled to have a pledge from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that he would not again take away from them the opportunity of discussing the Motion which was first in his name on that day's Paper, which opportunity had been already five times taken away from them by the action of the Government in appropriating the days of private Members.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) also thought the House should have an assurance from the Government that, as this Tuesday was taken on account of the general desire which had been expressed to discuss the Financial Relations question, on every Tuesday in the near future private Members would be allowed to exercise the rights which the Standing Orders conferred upon them. He would point out that there was a Motion of great importance in regard to the food supplies of the country down for discussion on Tuesday next, and he hoped that day would not be taken by the Government.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said that two criticisms had been made upon the policy of the Government—one personal and the other general. It had been said that he had shown scant courtesy to private Members in having put down the Financial Relations Motion for that night and to-morrow, and in having given but too short a notice of the intentions of the Government in that respect. He thought the accusation of the scant courtesy should have been the very last to have been brought against him. [*Cheers.*] But then, one never knew what was in store for him. [*Laughter.*] He would point out to his hon. Friend the Member for Horsham that on Thursday last he stated distinctly that, while he hoped the Debate on the Irish Financial Relations might be confined to one night, he felt himself bound by a pledge he had given early in the Session not to put an undue restriction on the limits of that Debate. He regretted his hon. Friend was deprived of his opportunity of discussing that night the Motion which stood in his name, but he was rather consoled by the thought that his hon. Friend had been fortunate in securing the first place on this day four weeks, and he trusted that when this day four weeks came—[AN HON. MEMBER: "That will be Easter," *and laughter*]—unless they were better employed elsewhere—[*laughter*]—his hon. Friend would have the opportunity he desired. With regard to the more general aspect of the question, he would point out that, though the Government had been attacked as if they were sacrificing the time of private Members for the convenience of Government business, he was sure the course they had taken in allotting that night and to-morrow to the discussion of the important question of Irish and Scotch Financial Relations rather than to the private Members' Resolutions and Bills on the Paper for those days, was with the approval of the overwhelming majority of private Members. ["Hear, hear!"] It would have been in the power of the Government, at the expense of the dislocation of important public business, and the detriment of the interests of poor Board Schools—the Bill for which they proposed to introduce on Monday—to have taken the Debate of the Irish Financial Relations yesterday, to allow two days to intervene, and to go on with it again on Thursday, to allow two days more to intervene, and resume the Debate on Monday. But, apart from the undue strain which it would place upon Government time, the inconvenience of such a course would be admitted by every one who desired the conciseness and continuity of Debate. Absolutely no course was open to them other than the course they had pursued, and if, in pursuing it, he had been, most unfortunately, guilty of discourtesy to any Member, he could only express his regret, saying at the same time that full notice had been given of the intentions of the Government, both in regard to that night, and, as far as possible, in regard to to-morrow.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the right hon. Gentleman had referred to that day four weeks. Would the right hon. Gentleman undertake that that day four weeks would not be a holiday, and, if not a holiday, that the House would sit. It was said that the course taken by the Government was only robbing one private Member to pay another

—robbing Peter to pay Paul—but some of them would prefer Paul to Peter. He held that there was no excuse for the action of the Government at that time of the Session. The Government got the Bills without discussion; they got the Estimates hand over first; and he was daily expecting a letter from the Whips earnestly requesting his absence that day. [*Laughter.*] The effect of taking private Members' time persistently, and of depriving them of fair opportunities of debate, would be that they would fall back on opportunities and methods which all Ministers, and particularly the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, regarded as illegitimate—reductions in Ministers' salaries and questions. Private Members had a great grievance, and if anything were to be done to remedy it, they must join together and have a Private-Member leader of their own. [*Loud cheers and laughter.*] He saw many hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite who would be well qualified for such a position, and whom he would be glad to follow. [*Laughter.*] This constant filching of private Members' time was bringing to nothingness the settled orders regulating the procedure of the House; and if it were to go on, he hoped the House would alter the Standing Orders, so as to bring them into accordance with the wishes of both Front Benches. ["Hear, hear!"]

Motion agreed to.

MOTIONS.

CANALS PROTECTION (LONDON).

Bill to provide for the Protection of Dangerous Places on Canals in the County of London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Holland, Mr. M. M. Bhownaggree, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Macdona, and Mr. James Stuart; presented and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 181.]

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT (NO. 2).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Salmon Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Dane, and Mr. James Roche; presented, and read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 13th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 182.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [29th March],

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Report and Proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland establish the existence of an undue burden of taxation on Ireland, which constitutes a great grievance to all classes of the Irish community, and makes it the duty of the Government to propose at an early day remedial legislation."—*(Mr. Blake.)*

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "House," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words,

"so long as the Exchequers of Great Britain and Ireland remain consolidated, all portions of the United Kingdom must be regarded as forming one country for fiscal purposes, and, if any genuine and tangible grievance does exist, it can only be satisfactorily removed by so adjusting the present fiscal system as to render it just and equitable to all persons in whatever part of the United Kingdom they may reside."—*(Mr. Whittaker.)*

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth), who was received with Nationalist cheers, said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his eloquent and very powerful speech, had made an appeal to those on the Ministerial side of the House which was received, as it deserved to be, with enthusiastic acquiescence. The right hon. Gentleman declared unmistakably for the Government that they would never consent to a political separation between Great Britain and Ireland; and that they would never permit a fiscal separation between the two countries. He was glad to hear that declaration, in which he entirely concurred, and for which the Unionist Party had been fighting for years. But within the limits of that policy there was much to be said with regard to the present condition of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. He could quite understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer—upon whom would fall the responsibility of framing any Measures to remedy a proved grievance—asking for more definite and detailed information. But the right hon. Gentleman had also declared his desire to do full justice to the claims of Ireland under the provisions of the Act of Union and the Act of 1816. The right hon. Gentleman, as the responsible Minister, was entitled to claim more time and more information, in connection with this important subject, at the hands of the Party of which he was one of the trusted Leaders; but the present Debate was partly for the information and guidance of the responsible Minister. The new Commission was not yet appointed, nor were its terms of reference settled, and as one who believed that the inquiry which had already taken place had established beyond dispute the fact that Ireland was now placed under an undue burden of taxation—[*Nationalist cheers*]—he wished to offer to the House and the Government some considerations with respect to the subject of the inquiry. He could quite understand the position of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley. The hon. Member was a Home Ruler, and the denial of the Irish case and the refusal to Ireland of the redress claimed were inducements to Irishmen to press on with the claim for Home Rule which the hon. Member would like to gratify. But it was much more difficult to understand the position of the hon. Member who seconded the Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"] Perhaps it was part of the national disinclination to agree with anyone else upon any subject, and especially with anyone of the same nationality. [*Laughter.*] But for those who were opposed to Home Rule, and were convinced that the policy of the Union was the only one which could be pursued with safety and advantage to this country or to Ireland, other considerations must come into play. The speech of the hon. and learned Member who moved the Motion dealt with a large range of history; but the hon. and learned Member did not strengthen his case by the elaborate reference to the history of Irish finance. That question could be speedily disposed of. It was true that in 1800 Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh made calculations as to the proportionate capacity of Ireland for bearing financial burdens, and those calculations turned out not to be correct. But no one would suggest that there was anything more than a mistake in that. Properly speaking there was hardly a mistake; for some years afterwards Mr. Grattan said that the expectations formed by Pitt and Castlereagh had been disappointed by circumstances which no one could possibly have foreseen—the enormous and extravagent cost of the war which was then going on. But if in 1800 a mistake was made in regard to the proportion, and if the proportion which Ireland was called upon to pay was in truth a larger contribution than her means would allow her to give, the answer was that there was no real hardship because Ireland never paid the excess. [*Cheers.*] From 1816 until 1853, so far as he knew, there had been no real complaint by any representative of the Irish people with regard to the proportions between the two countries during those years. The real grievance began—and undoubtedly there was a grievance—in 1853. Now, in regard to the Commission, there was no doubt as to the intention with which it was appointed. In intention it was appointed to promote a Home Rule Bill. It was a packed Commission, in regard to questions of policy it was not a fair Commission, but at the same time he could not help saying that in the reports of the different sections they had recorded not merely the opinions of the members themselves in some cases upon certain disputable points of policy, but they had recorded conclusions of fact which did not rest upon the authority of members of the Commission at all, but upon an authority which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the last person to challenge or controvert. The strength of the Irish case in this discussion was that it did not rest upon the conclusions of the Commissioners with regard to taxable capacity at all; it rested upon the question of the proportionate wealth of Ireland as compared with this country. Suppose it to be ascertained that the wealth of Ireland as compared with the wealth of this country was as 1 to 20; he presumed no economist would deny that the proportion of capacity for bearing taxation must be say, as 1 to 30. It must be a very different figure, because it had become an axiom of taxation now that in fixing taxable capacity you ought first to make some allowance for the necessary expenditure of the individual before you deal with the question of his income which was liable to taxation. They might then for the purposes of the present Debate leave apart the difficult and obscure question of taxable capacity, because when the Commission came to a unanimous resolution that the relation between Ireland and Great Britain was as 1 to 20, or 1 to 21, they were dealing with statistics which appeared to them to indicate the wealth of the country and not making allowance for reductions of income in Ireland and England respectively of an amount which would leave a taxable residue after that. But when they had got rid of that question what remained to be dealt with? Why, practically the whole information that the Commission had used in their reports was given to them by one witness of supreme authority, not only in consequence of his official position and of his own great authority, but because he came before the Commission not to speak for himself alone, but for the collective experience and judgment of the Treasury which he represented. If they lost to-morrow all record of the reports of the Commissioners themselves, and if they still had the first and second volumes of the reports of evidence, the first containing that most elaborate memorandum by Sir E. Hamilton upon the financial history and present condition of Ireland, they should find in that practically all the facts with which they wanted to deal. When they had ascertained that between 1853 and 1860 there were alterations made in the fiscal system of this country which resulted in increasing the burdens upon Ireland by something like two and a half millions a year, an increase made at the very time when Ireland was suffering from one of the most terrible famines in her history, let them turn to a table proposed by Sir E. Hamilton showing the history of the financial relations of Great Britain and Ireland since that date. Beginning with 1849-50 before the change of taxation occurred, this table showed that on that date the total taxed revenues of Great Britain was £2 7s. 8d. per head. In Ireland the total taxed revenue was 13s. 11d. Then came the great alteration in taxation. In 1849–50 in Great Britain it was £2 7s. 8d.; in 1859–60, £2 10s.; in 1869–70, £2 5s. 9d.; in in 1879–80, £2 0s. 5d.; in 1889–90, £2 3s. 4d.; in 1893–4, £2 4s. 10d.; so that at the end of this series of years each person in Great Britain paid 3s. a head less in total taxation. Take the Irish figures. In 1849–50 it was 13s. 11d.; in 1859–60, £1 5s. 4d. [*Nationalist cheers*]; in 1869–70, £1 5s. 5d.; in 1879–80, £1 4s. 11d.; in 1889–90, £1 9s.; in 1893–4, £1 8s. 10d.; so that while during that series of years the British contribution had diminished by 3s. a head the contribution to taxation in Ireland had increased from 13s. 11d. to £1 8s. 10d. [*Nationalist cheers.*] That was not a question of the conclusion of the Commission. [*Nationalist cheers.*] It was the carefully-prepared evidence of the Treasury on this point; and he did not think it was possible to read these figures, and to know anything about the history of Ireland since 1850, without realising that there had come upon the people permanently crippled by the famine, and who had not, so far as they could see, actually to this day recovered—[*Nationalist cheers*]—the effects of the changes which were made in 1853–60 in the continuance of the burden, while upon Great Britain, which had been advancing from year to year with magnificent prosperity and increased resources in the means of its people, there had been actually a diminution of taxation. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not only, of course, the famine that crippled Ireland. There had been put before the House, in the earlier passages of the speech of the hon. and learned Member who moved this Resolution, certain most interesting statistics tending to show the poverty of Ireland. In answer, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as every Chancellor of the Exchequer and every Irish Secretary had said for the last 40 years in that House, "Oh, there is a story of prosperity to tell on the other side. Look at the savings banks—[Mr. T. M. HEALY: And the postage stamps]; look at the number of sheep and cattle." He remembered hearing in that House about 30 years ago the second Sir Robert Peel, speaking as Chief Secretary, boasting of the number of sheep and cattle the people possessed in Ireland; and he remembered hearing Lord Salisbury, who was then sitting below the Gangway opposite, beginning his speech:—

> "Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt the right hon. Baronet wishes the inhabitants of Ireland were all sheep."

[*Nationalist laughter, and cheers.*] They had had this kind of declaration from the Treasury Bench for many years, and he was not surprised to hear the reference to the savings banks. But he was surprised to hear quoted, as evidence of the prosperity of Ireland, the increased prices paid for tenant right in that country. Considering the increasing prices paid for tenant right were really prices paid for an interest carved out of an estate which belonged to the landlord, it was curious to see that the transfer of a property from one proprietor to another should be quoted to the House of Commons as an illustration of the advancing prosperity of the country. [*Nationalist cheers.*] He did not think that the statistics which the hon. and learned Member gave could be disposed of in this fashion. They were statistics of most serious import. The population of Ireland was still diminishing; it had diminished by far too large a proportion for many years past; and unhappily, there had gone out from Ireland the youth and the strength of Ireland—[*Nationalist cheers*]—to find a home in other countries, and to leave behind a population whose lack of industrial force and capacity were too painfully indicated by some of the statistics quoted as to the proportion of blind in Ireland, the number of lunatics, and the increase of pauperism. Those were statistics to give one pause when one thought of the too cheerful condition of the population of Ireland. There was another part of those statistics which seemed to him to be very serious. Births and deaths were unsatisfactory enough, but Ireland was a country celebrated for the morality of its people; and if they found in that country such statistics as they had with regard to the marriage rate, it showed that the burden of poverty was pressing upon the people in a way which checked among them the development of that family life which was the strength of a nation, and to a great extent the happiness of any people. [*Nationalist cheers*]. Statistics of that kind were of the most serious force, and he did not think they were to be met by some quotations from savings banks returns or postal receipts. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The House could not stand aside and refuse to make inquiry; nor did the Government propose to do so. The real question in this Debate was whether there was to be a further inquiry at the desire of the Government with regard to certain matters which it was necessary to ascertain. But no one could suggest a single question contained in the first paragraph of the reference to the new Commission which had not been fully and completely answered by the officials of the Treasury on the best information they could possibly obtain. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The amount of Imperial expenditure on Ireland was not a matter of controversy; it was laid before the House every year, and they had obtained the amount of local expenditure in each of the three kingdoms in a complete table. Then they were to get the true revenue of each of the three kingdoms; but the moment the figures were before them it was merely a subtraction sum in order to answer the question put in the first reference. Upon these very questions a great amount of labour had already been expended by the representatives of the Treasury. In 1890 a Select Committee was appointed to consider the Financial Relations of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the first three paragraphs of the reference to that Committee practically covered the whole of the first paragraph of the reference to the Commission now proposed by the Government. On 18th August 1890 the Committee reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) and the Secretary to the Treasury had undertaken to collect information and to have returns prepared. The figures were prepared and were now available, and, together with the table prepared by Sir E. Hamilton and a Report which bore the name of Sir J. Hibbert, and was issued in 1893, they supplied a complete answer to the questions embodied in the reference to the new Commission. With the figures supplied from these authoritative sources it was perfectly easy to calculate the percentage of Ireland's contribution to the Imperial expenditure from the year 1889–90 down to 1896. The average contribution for that period was 3·44. He could not understand what additional information the Government could possibly want, or where they were to go for it. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The First Lord of the Treasury said himself on 16th February, "As all the information that can be obtained about the estimated taxation of Ireland and Great Britain was laid before the late Commission, it may be assumed that the new Commission will not find it necessary to go into that again." Now, the figures which showed a percentage of contribution to the Imperial expenditure of 3·14 had been seized upon by the opponents of the Irish claim as if they absolutely disposed of it. The argument was that the Irish claimed to pay taxes in the proportion of one to 20, but that, as a matter of fact, they were only contributing to the Imperial expenditure in the proportion of one to 32 or 33. Sir David Barbour said in his report—

> "On the assumption that the 'taxable capacity' of Ireland is one-twentieth of that of the United Kingdom, Ireland paid in 1893–4 about 23 millions sterling more than she would have paid if the total revenue taken from her had been in proportion to her 'taxable capacity.' In the same year there was expended for Irish purposes about 3¾ millions in excess of what would have been admissible if the expenditure for Irish purposes had also been in proportion to Ireland's 'taxable capacity.' On the whole account Ireland may be said to have been a gainer in 1893–4 of about one million sterling, or that, in other words, after meeting the expenditure for Irish purposes, she contributed about one million less towards Imperial purposes than she would have done if her contribution for Imperial purposes had been in the proportion of her 'taxable capacity.'"

Sir David Barbour seemed to think that that disposed of the whole question, and the Edinburgh reviewer took much the same view, for he said:—"Had it not been for the legislation of 1853–60 the contribution of Ireland would be very little greater at the present day than it was in 1817. The total increase would be considerably short of a million. But, however formally correct the equalisation as actually carried out, it does seem from the point of view of true equity and practical wisdom to have been not only singularly inopportune, but, having regard to all the circumstances of the time, really unjust." But it seemed to him that this proportion of one to 32 was highly disputable. The representatives of Ireland upon the Commission, it was true, did not greatly resist its acceptance, but they explained that they attached comparatively little importance to it, because, in their opinion, the calculation was irrelevant. The Irish representatives were, however, perhaps remiss in allowing the figure to pass unchallenged, because there was very good reason for believing that this alleged contribution of only one-thirty-second to the Imperial expenditure was a loose calculation altogether. But if he were objecting to the claim of Ireland in this matter, and anxious to refuse to consider her case upon the ground that there was no grievance of this kind, he certainly should not appoint another Commission, for a new Commission would probably examine the figures more exhaustively. They had some means, however, of correcting the calculation themselves. The distinction between payments for local services and the amounts contributed to the Imperial revenue began in 1890 in the reference to the Committee then appointed, and the Treasury, in the Report which they then supplied, dealt with "Imperial Services, English Services, Scotch Services, and Irish Services," and said that expenditure on the National Debt Service and expenses incurred under the National Debt Redemption Act, the Naval Defence Fund, Army Services, Ordnance Services, and Navy Services must be regarded as strictly Imperial. They also said that the expenditure charged upon the Consolidated Fund included items which were clearly Imperial or which could not be divided between the three Kingdoms. Lord Welby's name appeared upon this Paper as that of the Treasury official who supplied the information, and, of course, Lord Welby was not likely to quarrel with his own classification before the Committee. The classification had so clearly and distinctly the strongest authority of the Treasury, that he did not think the Government could expect that any further investigation of the matter would alter the figures to the detriment of Ireland, but it might possibly alter them the other way. [*Nationalist cheers.*] If, for instance, the cost of the collection of taxes, the Lord Lieutenant's charges, the large expenditure with regard to education in the Queen's Colleges, and a large proportion of the cost of the police were made Imperial charges, it would very largely alter the figure with respect to Ireland. The Edinburgh reviewer, in one of his most interesting passages, concluded that if reasonable adjustments were made a sum of three-quarters of a million would be taken from Irish local expenditure. If they made the allowance which the reviewer suggested, it would be found that Ireland contributed to the Imperial expenditure a proportion of one twenty-second, which was very little short of the full contribution which anybody had suggested that she ought to make. There were other considerations which ought to be borne in mind, and if this new Commission was to be appointed it would be as well to take some note of the extent to which moneys voted by Parliament, whether for English, Scotch, Irish, or Imperial purposes, were expended within England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not think the calculation was legitimate at all for reasons which stood apart from the discussion, but if they dealt with the matter on the footing that there were three taxable areas to be considered, and were endeavouring to ascertain the burden upon these areas, it was obvious that the question how much expenditure took place within those areas was a most important question. Of the money expended on the public services in Ireland he should think a good deal came to England, but of the money similarly expended in England he was afraid very little flowed over to Ireland; and he hoped the Commission would be entitled to examine what proportion of the sums voted under each head were actually expended in the country to which the amount referred. The second question in the reference was how the expenditure on Irish local services for which the State wholly or in part provides, compares with the corresponding expenditure in England and Scotland, and whether such Irish expenditure might with advantage be readjusted or reduced. Surely they wanted no Commission about that. They had already the figures with regard to Irish local expenditure, and it seemed a little absurd to refer to a Commission the question whether Irish expenditure might with advantage be readjusted or reduced. The question had been reported on by the late Commission. Lord Farrer and his colleagues said,—

> "We are of opinion that the excessive expenditure of Ireland, although it may be no justification for the excessive taxation of Ireland, was at once a pecuniary loss to the taxpayers of Great Britain, and a cause of demoralisation to Ireland."

No Commission they could have would recommend more strongly than that the readjustment or reduction of Irish taxation. Suppose the new Commission were to report that the expenditure upon the civil government in Ireland was moderate in amount, reasonable in character, and produced an effective and a satisfactory result in economical and good government, the House would tear up the report with ridicule. He knew the reasons of much of this extravagant expenditure. Hon. Members opposite had said that so long as this country dealt with them in a way which they did not approve, incurring expenditure which they did not desire to sanction by their votes, they were determined to get all they could; and as long as they were being taxed so heavily, they meant to get as much back as they could, and did not mind very much whether it was the salary of an unnecessary Judge, or was expended in any other way. The way in which the House had dealt with Irish expenditure had been perfectly grotesque. ["Hear, hear!"] Last night the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that, if hon. Members opposite would assist in making a little reduction in the excessive cost of the judicial establishment in Ireland, he would promise that they would have the full advantage of every shilling of the saving.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He denied that to-day.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): No, I did not; I adhere to every word of that statement. I said I could not deal with matters of the past, and that I was only responsible for matters of the future.

SIR E. CLARKE said he would give an illustration of the way in which we dealt with the expenditure in Ireland. Not many years ago, a judgship fell vacant while a Government was in power which did not know whether it would last very much longer. The Judge was not wanted, and the appointment was kept vacant for two years. When that Government was out of power a most estimable friend of theirs received that Judgeship. [*Laughter and Irish cheers.*] But not an hon. Member opposite suggested that the Judgeship should be put an end to. [*Ministerial laughter.*] The third paragraph in the terms of reference to the proposed Commission was very important, as it recognised that the Act of Union was still in force, and was a most important acknowledgment of the case of the Irish Members. It acknowledged the right of the Irish people to come with the Act of Union and the Act of 1816 in their hands, and to claim, if they could show good cause in the circumstances of their country, to have exemptions or abatements. The question now had passed from the region of Treasury investigation and of financial fact to a most controversial discussion of political matters. He greatly regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should propose to take three Judges from England, Scotland and Ireland to serve on the proposed Commission. He hoped they were not going on with the practice of withdrawing judicial officers from their proper work to put them on Commissions with which they had nothing to do, and upon which their authority would practically be of no use at all. [*Irish cheers.*] The House must construe for itself the meaning of the words in this reference, and they would construe them, he believed, not in a technical or niggardly spirit, but with the desire to give full effect to the pledge which was contained in the Act of Union and the Act of 1816, as to the separate treatment which Ireland should receive. He would call attention to some weighty words which were spoken so late as the 12th of March by the Prime Minister, in reply to a deputation of Irish landlords. He said—

> "Royal Commissions are of two kinds; they are either machines of investigation conducted by men who are neutral and impartial—and I am afraid that kind of Royal Commission is excluded by the circumstances of the case, because the controversy has gone on so long, has embraced so wide an area, that almost every person of intellectual competence is known to

have proclivities on one side or the other—or they are cases of Royal Commissions, of which we have had several instances in recent years, where neutrality is attempted to be obtained on the principle on which a chemist gets neutrality in the drugs that he compounds—that is, by putting together the extreme forms of opposite qualities. The men of the most violent—I will not say violent, but of the most pronounced opinion in opposite directions are put together, and it is expected that a neutral and just report will come out of that contrivance. As a matter of fact the Royal Commission really becomes nothing less than a ring within which the opposing combatants fight out their differences, and they present what Mr. Gladstone in a very celebrated speech described as a litter of reports. I do not think, therefore, that you will gain very much by going for a Royal Commission."

[*Ironical Irish Cheers.*] What Commission was it they were going to have in this case? If it was only to obtain financial facts, they did not want a Commission. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave directions to the Treasury officials he would have within the next week reports upon all these points given by persons whose authority would never be questioned, whereas he would gain nothing if they were filtered through the different Members of a Royal Commission. It would be far better to have these questions fought out in that House, rather than within the limits of a Royal Commission. ["Hear, hear!"] The question raised by the third paragraph of the terms of reference was a serious question of policy, and not a question of fact at all. They had got all the facts, the question was, whether in dealing with Ireland, they were entitled to set off the expenditure of the local services in Ireland against her general contribution. It was perfectly clear that the scheme of the Act of 1816 was that such taxes as Parliament might think right being imposed, the produce of those taxes should come into a common fund, and out of that fund the expenditure was to take place by one authority, which was the authority of that House. He thought the expenditure upon payment of the police in Ireland was as much an Imperial charge as anything else that appeared on our accounts [*Irish cheers.*] When he heard the conflicting views which were put forward, he asked himself with some wonder which were the Unionist views? [*Ironical Irish cheers.*] If this were properly to be called Irish expenditure, he could see no escape from the conclusion that it must be governed by Irishmen according to Irish ideas. [*Irish cheers.*] It was because he believed that it could not properly be called Irish expenditure at all, and that it was all Imperial expenditure that he himself protested against the attempt to cut and carve up the accounts of our great Imperial State and open separate accounts, with debit and credit, for Ireland and Scotland, as if they were mere branches connected with us, but were not part of the one Imperial whole. He felt very strongly that whilst it was necessary in order to fulfil our treaty obligations to Ireland, that we should carefully regard the condition of Ireland, and endeavour to deal fairly and generously with her, in her need, if need be proved to exist, we should absolutely refuse to cut up the account of our Imperial expenditure. He would add in parenthesis that there was this fatal flaw about the calculation. They were trying to split the taxation as if it did not matter how large was the tax they imposed, so long as they spent it upon the population where it was raised. ["Hear, hear!"] According to that theory they would be doing Ireland, in her poverty and trouble, no harm at all, if they were to impose three millions more taxes per annum upon her, always provided that they doubled the number of her police—[*Ironical Irish cheers*]—and gave her more Judges—[*Irish cheers*]—and for the special benefit of the landlords gave her an army of Assistant Commissioners. He believed that the figures and documents to which he had referred established an undue burden of taxation upon Ireland. Two answers were made to the demand of Ireland for a redress of that burden. One was the extraordinary attack which was made upon the Irish people in regard to their drinking. It seemed to him rather pharisaical for Englishmen to be talking about Ireland in this matter as if that country was afflicted and consumed by a passion for intoxicating drink. There was no doubt that the amount of drink consumed in Ireland was far less in quantity per head of the population than the amount of drink consumed in this country. [*Nationalist cheers.*] In England the amount spent upon intoxicating drink was £4 2s. per head, as against £2 16s. per head in Ireland; and everyone knew that from crimes generally associated with the excessive consumption of intoxicants, such as crimes of gailianty and violence, Ireland was singularly free. [*Nationalist cheers.*] It was true that in Ireland an average of one gallon of whisky was consumed per head of the population every year, but when they remembered that in England an equal quantity of spirits was consumed, in addition to an enormous quantity of beer, which was not taxed to its full alcoholic extent, it was hard that this attack should be made upon Irish people. When one came to examine the figures, it was seen that there was no ground whatever for the charge of drunkenness that was made against them. It was said also in answer to the Irish demand that what Parliament had to deal with was not the Irish question only, but a general question, and that the trouble which had afflicted Ireland as an agricultural population was a trouble which had afflicted other agricultural populations as well. That was perfectly true; and it was for the agricultural Members of the House to consider, in dealing with fiscal affairs, how far the commercial policy which had been followed—this country had acted in diminishing the value of agricultural land in bringing very heavy burdens of trouble and poverty on the people. ["Hear, hear!"] This was a very large question, no doubt; but he did not observe in the proposed reference to the new Commission it should be investigated. But even if it were so, that would be no reason whatever why Ireland should be called upon to wait when there had been a demonstration that she had been unfairly treated in fiscal affairs, and that the wrong she now suffered under required some amendment. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The matter, of course, was a very difficult one, but he thought they were dealing with it in a comparatively happy time. During the first seven years of his service in this House, there were great and strong passions and animosity shown between one side and the other, and many bitter things were thought and said, and undoubtedly many hard blows were given during the Home Rule fight. But he trusted that those scars were healed, and that they were able to discuss this matter with some consideration for each other. He hoped the House would address itself to the consideration of Ireland's needs and troubles with a desire to do justice to her. ["Hear, hear!"] If Parliament insisted, as they did insist, upon maintaining the political union between the two countries, they could only justify that insistance by carrying out that which they had again and again declared to be the principle of their action—the just treatment of Ireland by this country. [*Nationalist cheers.*] He hoped they would all, in dealing with this matter, be able to give to Ireland that security upon which she was told to rely a century ago—the security of the liberality, the justice, and the honour of the British people. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR THOMAS SUTHERLAND (Greenock) said he approached the question from the standpoint of one who had been actively engaged in the work of the Royal Commission. In order to explain his position more clearly, he should state that it was not until after he had accepted a position on the Commission that he had an opportunity of making himself acquainted with the terms of reference. As a member of the Commission, he naturally supposed it would be so constituted as to do justice, not only to the Irish, but also to the English people. He presumed that under the terms of reference there would be a general inquiry, that the Commissioners would not be directed, as it were, to conduct a one-sided investigation; and that they would have a free hand as to the evidence. But he had been too sanguine, as the reference, in the view of the majority of the Commission, appeared intended to pave the way for a separation between the Exchequer of Great Britain and Ireland. He did not profess to be able to determine what were the intentions of the late Government in framing the reference on the particular lines on which it was framed; but the result was that the majority of the members of the Commission felt that their freedom of judgment was fettered, and that they were bound to pursue the inquiry on certain lines, he might almost say, towards a prescribed end. They, the majority, were in consequence bound to assume certain theories which appeared to be of a somewhat novel character. For instance, it was held that for the purposes of the inquiry the individual taxpayer had no existence whatever; that they were bound to leave out of sight the specific character of the taxes levied and paid; and to treat the whole question simply and solely as a dispute between two nationalities in respect to their respective quota of taxation. It could not be too clearly borne in mind, when dealing with this subject, that but for the great difference between the debt of Great Britain and the debt of Ireland, the fiscal union of the two countries would have taken place at the same time as the political union in 1800; and that it was solely out of consideration for Ireland—so that she might not be saddled with a great debt—that that arrangement was not carried out for 16 years afterwards. The difference between the two countries in 1816 was this—that while Great Britain was in a position to meet her enormous debt and gigantic expenditure, Ireland was reduced to a position of almost insolvency. The amalgamation of the Exchequers was brought about in the interest, not of Great Britain, but of Ireland, in order that 84 millions of debt standing against Ireland might be transferred to the shoulders of the taxpayers of this country. Thus the quota system came to an end. From 1816 to the present time the taxpayers in England, Scotland and Ireland had simply been the taxpayers of the United Kingdom and in no sense the taxpayers of the respective countries. Lord Farrer in his Report frankly stated why he took a new departure—it was because Mr. Gladstone had introduced two Home Rule Bills; and the reference appeared to Lord Farrer's judgment to be restricted to that point of view. Practically, Lord Farrer had drawn up a new Home Rule constitution. But the light in which he felt bound to regard the question was this—whether, as between the taxpayers of Great Britain and Ireland, there was an injustice done in the method of levying taxes which would admit of a practical remedy. The majority of the Commissioners having adopted the separate entity theory, naturally sought to devise a principle of taxation to correspond with it. The evidence was all in that direction; but it was noticeable that the downtrodden taxpayers never put in an appearance from first to last. Excepting the official evidence, the whole of the evidence was that of statistical experts—extremely interesting and speculative, but suited rather to the consideration of philosophic societies, which played with millions as boys would marbles, than to that of practical politicians. He doubted whether the whole of this voluminous evidence added anything to the knowledge acquired from the Home Rule Debates as to the comparative wealth of the two countries. As to the taxable capacity of Ireland compared with Great Britain, Mr. Sexton put it at 1 to 36; and Sir David Barbour said the proportion might be 1 to 16, and was not more that 1 to 20. But even if the taxable capacity could be ascertained with certainty, it would lead nowhere, unless Parliament were prepared to impose taxes on areas instead of on individuals. And such a proposition it was hardly worth while to discuss. While the majority of the Commissioners agreed up to a certain point, there was a tremendous cleavage among them when they came to giving practical effect to their views. Mr. Childers said, "Let the consumers be overtaxed if you will, but give compensation to someone else." Lord Farrer said, "Perish the idea of doles. Let Ireland tax herself." Lord Farrer omitted the obvious consideration that if taxation were reduced, consumption might increase, and the people be more overtaxed than ever. But Lord Farrer anticipated that a lower revenue should be obtained for Ireland, and remarked that it was hopeless, in the circumstances, to expect any contribution from Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer. At that suggestion Lord Welby was scandalized, and wrote a separate Report, saying that it was not only necessary for Ireland to continue to make a contribution to the Imperial Exchequer, but that it should be a larger contribution. Sir D. Barbour said that Ireland ought to pay at least a million more than now. He did not deny that there was certain reality in this separate entity question, which was justified by the Act of Union and the legislation of 1817 to a very limited extent—namely, that abatements and exemptions should be granted to Ireland, and to Scotland as well, accordingly as circumstances appeared to demand. But the Commissioners were so bent on making larger demands, that they did not condescend to notice the claim of Ireland for abatements and exemptions. Supposing that the constitution of the country were changed so that entities and not individuals were taxed, the necessary corollary would be that expenditure would most rigorously have to be taken into account, in order to determine the contribution of each country to the Imperial Exchequer. The Commissioners were required to state the amount of Imperial expenditure to which Ireland should equitably contribute. Mr. Childers, in his draft Report, ignored the question; but there was a singular unanimity among the Irish witnesses upon it. They said that Irish taxation must be regulated according to Irish separate ideas, but that Irish expenditure was not a local but an entirely Imperial affair. If Irish expenditure, instead of being high, had been low, there was little doubt that these witnesses would have reversed the reasoning before the Commission, and declared that the low expenditure was an entirely Irish affair. In Scotland the revenue was high and the expenditure was low, and if ever the question of the separate taxation of England, Scotland and Ireland became a question of practical politics, there would be a very serious quarrel on this point between the Home Rulers of Scotland and Ireland. The expenditure in Ireland might be extravagant, and might require revision. In that case, it became clear that Mr. Childers's idea of adding £2,500,000 to the expenditure of Ireland seemed almost grotesque. It was also true that there was absolutely no economic drain from Ireland in regard to taxation. Ireland received back in local and Imperial expenditure every penny she contributed to the revenue—a very different case to that which obtained in Scotland, where the expenditure was very low, and the balance of revenue contributed to the Imperial Exchequer was very high. But if the expenditure in Ireland was extravagant, Parliament was responsible for it, and he held that extravagant expenditure did not and could not justify unfair or unjust taxation. Was the taxation of Ireland unjust? On that question it was absolutely impossible for him to get over one simple fact which constantly stared him in the face—namely, that taxation was a personal burden, and that its justice or injustice could only be determined on individual and not on collective grounds. He disbelieved in the idea of separate taxation of any portion of the United Kingdom, because he was certain it would pass the wit of man to devise a satisfactory solution of what each country ought to contribute to the common purse. Mr. Gladstone never intended to put forward the idea that there should be no contribution to the Imperial Exchequer, but that was the main essence of the majority Reports, and the meaning of it was that some millions would have to be transferred, if the majority Reports were acted upon, to the shoulders of the taxpayers of Great Britain. Was the taxation of Ireland unjust? Between 1800 and 1850 there was an enormous variety of taxes levied in Great Britain which were never applied in Ireland at all. Between 1800 and 1816, Great Britain raised 265 millions of war taxes from which Ireland was entirely exempted. The case of direct taxation indeed, had been given up, but a great deal had been interpolated in the Reports in order to give the effect of showing that a hardship had been imposed on Ireland by the burden of the Income Tax. He contended that the masses of the people in Ireland had derived great benefit from the burden as well as the masses of people in Great Britain. With regard to indirect taxation it was and must be admitted that it weighed heavily on the humble classes, and the question might be raised whether direct taxation ought not to be carried further, and a greater alleviation brought about for the benefit of the humbler classes, in wiping out the duty on tea, and so on. But the weight of indirect taxation was a poor man's question and not by any means exclusively an Irish question. There were many poorer people on this side of the channel than in Ireland. Indirect taxation in Ireland, what did it amount to? as nearly as possible 5 millions, and of that 5 millions 4½ were obtained on spirits, beer and tobacco. The spirit duty per head paid by people in Scotland amounted to the noble and generous figure of 17s. 6d., whereas the consumer in Ireland only paid 10s. 9d., and therefore any alteration in the spirit duty was very much more a question affecting

Scotland than the people of Ireland. What was a man's taxable capacity in the matter of whisky? There were a great many hon. Members who professed and no doubt carried into practice their teetotal principals. They might have a large taxable capacity but they did not avail of it, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not able to get hold of them in connection with whisky at any rate, but they had every reason to hope and trust that in the Death Duties they were piling up something which would come in usefully hereafter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In plain and intelligible language the crux of the whole Irish case was to be found in the consumption of beer, spirits, and tobacco; but that consumption was by no means excessive in comparison with the consumption in England or Scotland. The taxable capacity in connection with these commodities could only be gauged by the consumption, and it was impossible to devise any other means for imposing that taxation. It would need a stronger case than could be found in the evidence of the Commission to transfer the taxes on these commodities from Irish to British shoulders. He thought that the Commission had been misled by the particular character of their reference, and he was opposed to anything approaching a debtor and creditor account between Great Britain and Ireland. He was convinced that the financial relations of Great Britain and Ireland could remain on no other footing except that of a common revenue and a common expenditure. He did not take any narrow view of the responsibilities and duties of that House in connection with Ireland, and no one could lament more than he did the backward state of the country, which was alike a reproach to Britain as to the Irish themselves. He should always be willing and ready to stimulate enterprise in Ireland by any legitimate means whenever the Irish were able and willing to help themselves. He hoped that the Irish people would look at this question with an endeavour to find out what was the whole truth regarding the financial relations between the two countries. ["Hear, hear!"]

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) said he had listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Longford and the masterly manner in which he had supported the Motion now before the House, and he failed to see that either the hon. Member for Spen Valley, who moved the Amendment, or the hon. Member for North Down who seconded it, had shaken one iota of the volume of evidence so plainly laid before the House by the hon. Member for Longford in support of his Motion. And if this matter was treated by the House as a matter of business, and of hard facts, he thought they would arrive at the same conclusion as the Royal Commission did, that an undue burden of taxation on Ireland undoubtedly existed. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment appeared to consider that the reason Ireland was unduly burdened by taxation was because Irishmen consumed too much whisky and smoked too much tobacco. But he had been unable to controvert a single argument or a single finding, either of the Royal Commission or the hon. Member for Longford; and the hon. Member for North Down's speech in seconding the Amendment, appeared to him to be, from first to last, an apology to Ireland and his constituents for the position he took up. It was hardly necessary to point out that the Commission whose Report this Motion was founded on was essentially a financial one. It was formed to report on financial facts, and if they had searched the world through, he believed they would not have found a better one, or one composed of more hard-headed men of business and brilliant men of figures. They had an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer in Mr. Childers, a great statistician in Lord Welby, one of the greatest English bankers in Mr. Currie, an European celebrity in Sir Robert Giffen, and another Treasury official, deeply versed in Irish finance, in Sir Robert Hamilton, an Irish banker in Mr. Slattery, and the head of one of the few Irish industries left to us in the Tory Member for Belfast, Mr. Wolff. It was true, that probably out of these 15 gentlemen, eight believed in Home Rule; but then, one of the greatest principles of Home Rule was that it must tend to the financial prosperity of the country to which it was applied. But, putting questions of politics on one side, he held that no one could reject the facts and figures of one of the ablest Royal Commissions that was ever appointed. He proposed to deal only with those points on which the Royal Commission were practically unanimous, namely: (1) That Great Britain and Ireland must, for the purposes of this Inquiry, be considered as separate entities. (2.) That the Act of Union imposed upon Ireland a burden which, as events showed, she was unable to bear. (3.) That the increase of taxation laid upon Ireland between 1853 and 1860 was not justified by the then existing circumstances. (4.) That identity of rates of taxation does not necessarily involve equality of burden. (5.) That, whilst the actual tax revenue of Ireland is about one-eleventh of that of Great Britain, the relative taxable capacity of Ireland is very much smaller, and is not estimated by any of us as exceeding one-twentieth. As regarded the first point—namely, that Ireland and Great Britain must be considered as separate fiscal entities, he did not think it was necessary to dwell. He believed the House was practically agreed on this point, and he commended to hon. Members opposite the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who said:—

> "I do feel fettered and limited by the terms of the Act of Union and the Resolution of 1816. When I find in the Terms of the Act of Union and the Resolution of 1816 that Ireland and Scotland were both recognised as taxable entities, whose circumstances were to be considered, then I think, taking one's stand upon the Act of Union itself, we are bound to give consideration to this Irish cause."

Speaking not only as a great legal authority, but also as an English statesman, who had never made political morality and honour subservient to political expediency, the hon. and learned Member had absolutely given his adhesion to the first, and, he thought he might say, to all five of the facts, on which the Royal Commission was agreed. As regarded the second conclusion, that the Act of Union imposed upon Ireland a burden which, as events showed, she was unable to bear, they found Mr. Pitt in 1799, when introducing the Act of Union stating:—

> "That the British Government did not seek the Union from a pecuniary motive. The Measure would infuse a large portion of wealth into Ireland, and supply its want of industry and capital. The zeal, the spirit, and the liberal policy of Great Britain gave ample proof that there was no ground for the apprehension that they would tax Ireland more heavily, and no foundation for the idea that Ireland would be subjected to an increase of taxes and a load of debt."

How had these assurances been fulfilled? Between the years 1800 and 1817, the taxation rose from two and a half millions to over six millions; in 1816, the average rate of taxation was over four and a half millions, and during those 16 years in which they were guaranteed by the so-called liberal and generous policy of Great Britain that there should be no increase of debt, the debt of Ireland rose from 28 millions to 141 millions. They also found that during the first 96 years of the Union, the taxation of Ireland had been raised from the two and a half millions which Ireland was assured was the limit of taxation, to over seven millions per annum; and, while Irish taxation at the Union was only 10s. per head, it was now no less than £1. 8s. 10d. per head. These were some of the blessings of the Union, which he was certain every Member of this House would consider Ireland was unable to bear. Now as regarded the third question, on which all the Members of the Commission were agreed—that the increase of taxation in 1853-1860 was not justified. The hon. Member for Waterford had stated that most of the enormous increase in taxation during this period was made by Mr. Gladstone. This was so, but he asked Irish Members to recollect that this very Royal Commission, whose finding they were now discussing, was Mr. Gladstone's last legacy to the Irish people. The retracing of his steps, and entirely changing his policy towards Ireland during the last five years of his Parliamentary career was a noble act of a most noble life. They found that during those seven years nearly two and a half millions per annum was added to the taxation of Ireland, and this at a time when the population of Ireland was rapidly diminishing and her wealth being gradually drained away through a universal policy of Free Trade having been forced upon her by the alteration made in the fiscal system of Great Britain. During this period a tax which had been somewhat severely commented on to the disadvantage of the Irish people, namely, the tax upon whisky, was raised from 2s. 8d. to 10s. per gallon. The impression conveyed by the First Lord of the

Treasury in a speech he made at Manchester, that there was no grievance as regarded Ireland, was quite incorrect. They would find that in England there was £4 2s. spent on intoxicating liquors per head, and in Ireland £2 13s.; but the Englishmen only paid 15s. 6d. taxation on £4 2s., while the Irishmen paid 13s. 6d. on £2 13s. He should like to explain this in a very simple way to the House. Take the alcoholic strength of a glass of beer, and also take a glass of whisky and reduce it to the same alcoholic strength as the glass of beer. The reduced mixture of whisky paid six times the amount of taxation as the glass of beer. This he thought thoroughly refuted the theory of the Member for Spen Valley. Now what were the facts? They took a poor agricultural country like Ireland, which had always been able to produce sufficient food products, not only to supply themselves, but had also been able to export a large quantity of surplus food products to Great Britain, and they practically ruined the only industry they had left, by allowing foreign supplies to be freely imported, forgetting that foreign countries had not to pay local and Imperial taxation, into the Treasury of England, and that Ireland had. The late Mr. Childers, one of the most brilliant advocates of Free Trade, in commenting on Sir Robert Peel's policy of abolishing duties on foreign corn and the importation of live and dead stock, wrote:—

> "The change is usually considered to have been advantageous to a population, the greater bulk of which had to depend, not upon agriculture, but upon manufacturing industry and commerce. It is evident the change has not been so advantageous to Ireland."

This was the opinion of a great Free Trader, himself an Australian. He felt certain it flashed through his great and kindly mind that Australia would not be at this moment one of the most loyal props of the British Empire had she been robbed and plundered like Ireland, by denying to her fiscal independence, and forcing her to accept a fiscal system for which Nature had utterly unfitted her. He did not think that any Member of that House could help agreeing that first having ruined the agricultural industry in Ireland by allowing all foreign food supplies free entry into Great Britain, it was utterly unjustifiable to raise the hideous taxation they had piled on his unhappy country by taxing almost the only commodities Ireland imported in order to raise the 78 per cent. of the taxation they impose on them, or in other words, while in England about 50 per cent. of the taxation was a tax out of the wealth of the country, and 50 per cent. only was a tax on consumable commodities, in Ireland 78 per cent. was a tax on consumable commodities, and was levied out of the very bodies of the people, who had no proportionate wealth. He did not consider that any Member of that House could differ with the fourth conclusion of the Royal Commission. In the celebrated speech of Mr. Pitt in 1785 he said:—

> "He most earnestly entreated the House not to be carried away by the idea that a poor country, merely because she enjoyed some exemption from taxes, was therefore able to cope with a rich and powerful country. The fact he was ready to contend was by no means so; on the contrary, the smallest burthen on a poor country was to be considered, when compared with those of a rich country, by no means in proportion with their several abilities; for if one country exceeded another in wealth, population, and commerce in a proportion of two to one, he was convinced that that country would be able to bear nearly ten times the burdens that the other would be equal to."

They had the best testimony to the truth of the finding on this point by the Royal Commission by the fact that the graduation of their own Income Tax was an example they always had before them, and on the justice of which all great financial authorities were agreed. The fifth and last conclusion of the Commission was that while the actual tax revenue of Ireland was about one-eleventh of that of Great Britain, the relative taxable capacity of Ireland was very much smaller, and was not estimated by any of them as exceeding one-twentieth, and as corroboration of this finding, which collectively was given by every member of the Commission, and which was the maximum that they agreed Ireland could be called upon to pay ("although several are of opinion it is far too high a rate to exact") they took as the best tests:—(1) Assessment as to Death Duties; (2) assessment to the Income Tax; although they acknowledged that all the other tests, viz., gross receipts of railways, 1 to 24; savings bank deposits, 1 to 19; money orders, 1 to 17; postal orders, 1 to 20; taxed commodities, etc., which they had earnestly inquired into, fully corroborated the two tests they had selected. Among all the tests taken by the Commissioners there was one very interesting test that might with some advantage have been dwelt on, and that was the effect of the taxation imposed on Ireland for naval and military expenditure. He thought they might take it as an axiom that military expenditure was intended to preserve the capital value represented in the different countries making up the United Kingdom, and that naval expenditure was intended to safeguard the ocean highway for the merchant ships of the United Kingdom, and therefore the tonnage of the foreign trade of Ireland and Great Britain might fairly be taken to represent the amount of cost that should be borne by each country. Taking the capital value as the test of military expenditure, and the tonnage value as the test of naval expenditure, Ireland would fairly have been called on to pay 1-33rd of military expenditure and 1-60th part of the naval, or the average for both would fairly be 1-45th of naval or military expenditure. He would take an average year, 1888. The total expenditure on the Army and Navy was £31,000,000. Now 1-45th of this amount, equal to £700,000, was a fair proportion for Ireland to pay; whereas the average charge allocated to Ireland for Naval and Military expenditure had equalled £1,992,000, or nearly three times the £700,000 that could fairly be charged against Ireland. To show the importance of this charge for three periods, he found the total charges for Civil Government, and Naval and Military expenditure in 1795 was £2,508,867; Naval and Military expenditure, £1,553,193, or 61·9 per cent.; in 1800, total charges, £6,854,504; Naval and Military expenditure, £2,757,193, or 40·2 per cent.; in 1893, total charges, £3,242,000; Naval and Military expenditure, £1,666,000, or 51·33 per cent.; or the average Naval and Military expenditure for the last 96 years was about 51·4 per cent. of total charges to be met by taxation on Ireland, or nearly three times her proper allocation; or, during the last 96 years over £100,000,000 has been charged to Ireland for Naval and Military expenditure in excess of what she ought to have paid. He thought that no Member of the House who had carefully read the fair way in which the Commissioners had argued out the question, could help agreeing that they had given every possible advantage to the claims of England, and, if anything, their Reports erred in tenderness towards the claims of the predominant partner. With that view they preferred to take the assessment as to the Death Duties in preference to the assessment as to the Income Tax, because the latter would be more to the disadvantage of Ireland. Now the Income Tax was the test taken by Lord Castlereagh in 1800 as the best criterion of the ability of the two countries to bear taxation when this Union was brought about. He would ask hon. Members opposite to note paragraphs 90 and 91 of Mr. Childers' Report. It must carry conviction to the hearts of those who represented large agricultural constituencies. Those paragraphs were:—

"(1) The change is usually considered to have been advantageous to a population the great bulk of which had to depend not upon agriculture, but upon manufacturing industry and commerce. It is, we think, evident that the change has not been advantageous to Ireland, a country in which there is but little trade or manufacturing industry, as it has been to England, that, although as consumers, the Irish population may have gained in some cases by the abolition of duties on food stuffs, yet that, on the other hand, as producers chiefly dependent upon agriculture, they have lost in a far greater degree by the cheap prices in the British markets, produced, at least in part, by the free and untaxed supply of foreign corn, live stock, butter, dead meat, cheese, eggs, and other articles of food, and that, at the same time, the taxation of, and the enhancement of spirit duties, changes effected partly for the very purpose of facilitating the remissions of taxation and question, and also in order to 'lighten the springs' of the manufacturing industry, in which her share is small. (2) Ireland being a country mainly inhabited by agricultural producers, could support its present population upon corn and meat produced there without having recourse, under ordinary circumstances, to a foreign supply of these articles, and could, at the same time, export a surplus of these food stuffs. The population of Ireland consumes a rather large amount, in proportion to its wealth, of spirits, tea and tobacco. This being so, it does not appear that a fiscal system which raises no revenue from foreign food stuffs, but does raise a large revenue from spirits, tea and tobacco, is advantageous to the population of Ireland, although it may be advantageous to the population of the United Kingdom, looked at as a whole. It may even perhaps be said that just as Ireland suffered in the last century from the protective and exclusive commercial policy of

Great Britain, so she has been at a disadvantage in this century from the adoption of an almost unqualified free trade policy for the United Kingdom."

He looked upon the Report of Mr. Childers as one of the most remarkable efforts that ever had been made by any of the great financial statesmen of this country. Here they had a great Free Trader, a great financial authority, throwing over the dogma of Free Trade, and telling England plainly, in the interest of honour and of justice, that in forcing upon Ireland, a small agricultural country, the fiscal laws which their great and teeming population of workmen and artisans had forced them to adopt, they committed an act of financial dishonesty, and imposed a ruinous and an unjust embargo on the industry of the country they had forced into union with them. He could not imagine any phase of the great and useful life of the late Mr. Childers more touching than this last act of his. They found him pointing out that the fetish of Free Trade he had so faithfully worshipped had brought ruin and unhappiness to Ireland, and at all cost to his own feelings, he had faithfully reported to the House his views and convictions. Surely no Member of the House could read unmoved the last effort of this honest and honourable statesman, at the close of a long and eventful Parliamentary career, with the very vista of a great eternity opening out before him and enabling him to point out, in no uncertain terms, that honour and justice demanded that the great burden imposed upon Ireland by this country should be removed, and that England should keep faith with the country she had entrapped into a disastrous union. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

*MR. HORACE PLUNKETT (Dublin Co., S.) said he was anxious to take part in that Debate, because he had already attempted to take part in it by way of Amendment, and he wished to explain the views he held upon the subject. He was not going to attempt to dive into those deep speculations which had been imported into this Debate, and which Mr. Edmund Burke, in another famous Debate on taxation, had called that great Serbonian bog in which whole armies had sunk. He was not going to mix himself up in Front Bench metaphysics or below-the-Gangway political economy. The Irish case might be summed up in two very simple figures, and they were the only figures in which he was going to indulge. Ireland contributed about 1-11th or 1-12th of the Imperial Revenue, and, by every test that the wit of man could apply, her capacity for bearing taxation was not more than 1-20th of that of the United Kingdom. Now, on those two simple figures they all had a feeling that something must be wrong. He believed that the evil arose out of the incidence of our taxation; it might be inevitable, but unquestionably the existing fiscal system pressed hardly upon the poorest classes. The difficulty in Ireland was this, that she had a far larger proportion of the poorest classes than any other part of the United Kingdom. As far as the economic position of Ireland was concerned, it was extremely simple as compared with that of England or Scotland. With the exception of a small area in the north-east of Ireland, the country was purely agricultural. It was always admitted, except for the purposes of the Agricultural Rating Bill Debates last year, that they were at present suffering from agricultural depression. From this cause the country was poor. Poverty was at the bottom of the whole trouble. He was inclined to agree with the dictum of Nassau Senior, that

"Ireland is over-taxed because she is poor rather than poor because she is over-taxed."

Of course, the English answer was, that the poor areas in England were suffering from the same grievance; but he could point out to the Government when they made that statement that the whole of their land legislation was based upon the difference between the different conditions of the agricultural population in Ireland and the agricultural population in the rest of the United Kingdom, but he did not think himself that the Irish people had any complaint as regarded that poverty that was natural and that was only incidental to agriculture. The poverty of which he complained was that for which England was directly responsible. Ireland's strongest case began at a period antecedent to that with which the Royal Commission dealt. It rested on the commercial restrictions imposed in the middle of the 17th century, and continued nearly till the end of the 18th century, and on the laws against the Catholics. It was admitted that England's policy had been ruthlessly to destroy every trade and industry in Ireland which might compete with the industries of the English middle classes. The woollen trade was killed, and the linen trade was hampered. Froude declared that if those trades had been allowed to follow the natural course, there would now be four Ulsters in Ireland instead of one. The people were thus driven back to a pastoral life, but even their cattle, sheep, and butter might not be exported. Then the economic effect of the laws against the Catholics had been too little taken into account. Honesty was essential to the success of industrial and trading communities; but the penal laws made it absolutely necessary for the Catholics, and the Protestants who succoured them, to practise lying and concealment. One branch of his own family was Catholic, and in the past it had been necessary for them, in order to keep the lands of their Roman Catholic kinsmen, to swear that those lands were their own. It was perjury, but he could not blush for it. He came across a curious letter the other day from a Protestant in Kerry who was in the habit of holding the title deeds for a Catholic friend—Maurice O'Connell, the uncle of Daniel O'Connell. At the expiration of the legal year, Mr. O'Connell wrote to his Protestant friend to ask him to make the statutory declarations as usual. The reply was:—

> "My Dear Maurice,—If I were a few years younger I would be as ready to oblige a friend as ever. But I regret that I am too near my end to perjure myself any more, even for so old and valued a friend as yourself."

Talk of the "moral and intellectual" damages of the Boers for a *mauvais quart d'heure* at Krugersdorp!—what was the claim of the Irish people for centuries of such oppression as this? This was an old story in point of years, but the effects remained, and were visible to-day. The Irish people had been utterly demoralised by this system of Government. As to what was to be done now, there were several possible courses. There might, first, be a differential system of taxation, for which there were, however, few advocates. There might, secondly, be a change in the fiscal system of the United Kingdom, so devised as to press less hardly on the poorer classes. That would undoubtedly remedy the Irish grievance, but he did not think there was any Irish Member who wished to wait for relief until that policy was adopted. By a process of exhaustion he came to the conclusion that the only course which the Irish could advocate was that a certain amount of money should be restored to them. ["Hear, hear!"] The question which seemed to him of most importance was, whether it was possible for England to deal with the problem of Irish poverty and make Ireland richer, and his view was that the simplest way to make Ireland richer was to attempt to improve the conditions of the agricultural industry. He had made a considerable study of the question of the elevation of agricultural communities in other European countries. Denmark and Wurtemburg had successfully solved the problem of elevating the conditions of—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I cannot see that the observations of the hon. Member are relevant to the Amendment before the House, which relates only to the financial relations between England and Ireland, and not to the question how Ireland is to be improved.

MR. DALY: Reduce the rents. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. PLUNKETT said they were all agreed on the Irish side that the present system of taxation pressed with undue weight upon the poorer country. ["Hear, hear!"] From Mr. Speaker's ruling he gathered that he could not speak on the Amendment he had put down, and, therefore, he would now state his general position upon this question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer the previous night had stated the final decision which the Government had come to upon the question, and he should say that, so far as he was concerned, it was a matter of very great disappointment to him. He felt that the overtaxation of Ireland had been absolutely proved, and, therefore, he had thoroughly made up his mind that it was quite impossible for him to dissociate himself any longer from the attitude which had been taken up by the majority of the Irish Members. [*Loud cheers.*] In the Motion which had been proposed there were some phrases with which he could not concur, but he felt that Ireland had a distinct grievance. He considered that the value which had been attached to their unity by the vast majority of the Irish, both Unionist and Nationalist, was so well founded, that he could not take the responsibility of opposing the Motion. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. J. C. BIGHAM (Liverpool, Exchange), in a maiden speech, said his desire was that the subject should be approached apart from party bias, and in his opinion the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth was evidence that there existed such a disposition on the Ministerial side. The hon. Member for South Longford (Mr. Blake) made two allegations in his speech —one that the burden placed upon Ireland was an undue burden, having regard to the Act of Union, and the other that the burden was an undue burden in existing circumstances. He asked the attention of the House to the 7th Clause of the Act of Union, which provided that in certain contingencies the Exchequers of the two countries might be amalgamated, and that the expenses should, in that event, be defrayed by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, subject to such exemptions and abatements as circumstances from time to time demanded. That was the bargain of 1800. It was said that the Act of Union imposed on Ireland in the first instance too large a contribution towards the expenditure of the United Kingdom. But Ireland did not bear the burden. Ireland borrowed money to discharge her indebtedness, with the result that when the Exchequers were amalgamated in 1817, an Irish debt of something like 112 millions had been incurred; thus, though it might be true that the Act of Union imposed upon Ireland a burden out of proportion to her ability to pay, the answer was that she shifted her burden on to the shoulders of the United Kingdom. In 1817 the large debt which she had incurred became part of the common indebtedness of the United Kingdom. No doubt Great Britain also borrowed during this period, and to that extent it might be said that one had to be set off against the other. But if Ireland's rights were to be dealt with according to the letter of this law, as it existed at the date of the Union, she ought now to be contributing at the rate of 1 in 8 instead of 1 in 11 or 12, which she was in fact at this moment contributing. The Act contemplated and provided for changed conditions, and by Article 7 arrangements were made for future indiscriminate contribution by means of equal taxes. By the same section it was said that indiscriminate taxation of articles should be subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements as circumstances might appear to demand. What did this mean? It meant that if the taxation of any article pressed unduly on Ireland it might be exempted or it might be abated as justice might require. That was the only right which Ireland now had under that Act, and if this Motion were pointed to such an exemption or abatement he could understand it as raising a possible grievance; but the Motion did nothing of the kind. He had not heard a word so far claiming an exemption or abatement of the taxes on any article whatever. In fact there was no grievance under the Act unless it were an English grievance that Ireland did not pay the share which that Act originally provided she should pay. Was Ireland unduly taxed regardless of the Act and with reference only to existing circumstances? If she was, which he doubted, the blame did not lie with any Conservative or Unionist Government. It lay solely with Mr. Gladstone. Carrying out the policy contemplated by the Act of Union successive Governments had remitted taxes on dutiable articles which were paid by Great Britain alone, but while relieving Great Britain they put no extra strain on Ireland. In 1819 the revenue of Great Britain was £51,000,000; the revenue of Ireland was £5,000,000. In 1850 the revenue of Great Britain was still about £51,000,000, and the revenue of Ireland still remained about £5,000,000. So that for the 30 years the proportion of contribution remained 1 in 11. It was not unimportant to remember that at the time of the Act of Union the proportion was fixed at 1 in 8, but as time progressed it altered to 1 in 11. In 1850 began the operation of the policy of Mr. Gladstone. He, however, did no more than follow out the policy of the Act of Union. He began then to raise the Spirit Duties in Ireland to the English level. He also put on Ireland the Income Tax of which England had so far the exclusive enjoyment. It was said that when he put on that tax the right hon. Gentleman promised to Ireland that she should suffer from it for no longer than seven years. He had no doubt whatever that Mr. Gladstone made that promise and broke it. But who listened to the promises of Chancellors of the Exchequer [*Ironical cheers.*] Who were the foolish people who thought that these promises were made seriously? But at that time Mr. Gladstone had some justification for imposing the tax, because he took from Ireland a debt of something like £4,000,000, which had been incurred in the interests of Ireland. The result was that whereas in 10 years the British contribution increased by 20 per cent., the Irish contribution increased something like 60 per cent. By the imposition of the Income Tax on Ireland, Mr. Gladstone did, no doubt, cause the revenue of Ireland to be increased by something like 60 per cent., whereas during the same period the revenue of Great Britain only increased something like 20 per cent. In 1850 the revenue of Great Britain was £52,000,000; the revenue of Ireland was about £5,000,000; so that the proportion was about 1 in 11. In 1860 the revenue of Great Britain had only increased to £62,000,000, whereas the revenue of Ireland had increased from £5,000,000 to £8,000,000. That fact did not violate any provision of the Act of Union. He agreed, however, that it was an inopportune, and in that sense unjust, burden upon Ireland; but the question was whether time and the changes of the last thirty-five years had not removed the grievance which probably was created about 1860. ["Hear, hear!"] His answer was distinctly "Yes." In 1860 the revenue of Ireland was something like £7,700,000, her expenditure about £2,300,000, leaving a difference available for common purposes of something like £5,500,000; whereas, if they took the figures of 1893-94 they would find that while the true revenue of Ireland remained about the same the expenditure had increased to something like £5,600,000, leaving available for common purposes only £2,000,000. Therefore, although the revenue during all that period remained about the same, Ireland got back from the common purse a difference of something like £3,300,000. During that time the revenue of Great Britain increased by about 50 per cent. from 60 to 90 millions, and thus, whereas Ireland was contributing one-eighth in 1860 she now contributed only about one-eleventh. Although the state of things he had thus described, with Ireland's contribution varying between one in eight and one in eleven, had been in existence for nearly a century, it was now suddenly discovered that some great injustice had been done to Ireland during the whole of that period, and it was said that the proportion ought to be one in twenty. That figure had been arrived at by inquiry into a question of extreme difficulty, and the exact nature of which he did not quite understand—[*ironical Opposition cheers*]—an inquiry into what was called the taxable capacity of Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] The question was, even assuming that proportion to be the right one, did the present condition of affairs constitute a grievance? He answered that question in two ways. First he would point out that individuals paid the taxes and not areas. [*Cheers.*] Irishmen paid, he understood, less per head than Englishmen, the former paying £1 8s. 10d. and the latter £2 4s. 10d. If £1 8s. 10d. in Ireland meant more per pound of income to an Irishman than £2 4s. 10d. to an Englishman, the grievance, it appeared to him, arose because Irishmen chose to consume more dutiable articles. ["Hear, hear."] That did not appear to be an Irish grievance at all, but a grievance which applied to every poor man in the United Kingdom. [*Cheers.*] It could not be remedied by any legislation that was to affect Ireland alone, but if at all by legislation affecting the whole of the United Kingdom. [*Cheers.*] Was it to be remedied by shifting two-and-a-half millions of taxation from Ireland on to England? All he could say was that such a policy would be most unpopular in England and Scotland. [*Cheers.*] Would the poor of Great Britain tolerate it or support it? Had his colleague (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) been present, he would have asked him would the Irishmen who lived in the Scotland Division of Liverpool like it? [*Cheers.*] He was satisfied they would not. [*Cheers.*] They did not want two-and-a-half millions of taxation shifted from Irish shoulders to the shoulders of Irishmen who happened to live in England. The revenue of Great Britain was something like ninety millions, of which thirty were appropriated for local purposes, so that to imperial taxation Great Britain contributed sixty millions. Ireland, therefore, contributed 1-30th of the money required for Imperial purposes. She therefore contributed, instead of one in 20, one in 30. It might be said that a part of the five and a-half millions which Ireland received from the public purse, was, to some extent, Imperial taxation; but after making the fairest and fullest allowance for the difference between what might be called the amount of the Imperial taxation and the amount of the local taxation, they could not reduce the proportion that Ireland paid to less than one in 20, which was the standard, as he understood, fixed by the majority of the Commissioners. Irishmen, he knew, said that all expenditure was Imperial expenditure. [*Nationalist cheers.*] They said:—"Why are you to differentiate between Great Britain and Ireland on the question of expenditure, and not to do so on the question of revenue?" But what would be the result? If Ireland were only to contribute one in 20, her revenue would be reduced to something like four and a-half millions, and if she were to receive out of the public purse five and a-half millions she would be receiving more than she contributed, and nothing would be left for Imperial purposes. It was true that Mr. Childers had stated that from the Imperial purse there should be handed over to Ireland something like two millions for the purpose of developing her resources. *Ex hypothesi* this would not remove the grievance, because it would leave the revenue in the ratio of one to 12, instead of one to 20, and the expenditure was not to be taken into account at all. So it was impossible, apparently, to relieve the grievance under which Ireland suffered by adopting the suggestion of Mr. Childers. The Irish Members said that the only true way to remove the grievance was by reducing their taxes. But how? He had not yet heard which tax was to be reduced. Unless Home Rule were intended to be the remedy he did not know what the remedy was, and he had listened anxiously to hear what tax it was that Irish Members suggested pressed hardly upon the people of Ireland, and ought to be removed. He did not know of any. He thought he had shown that Ireland suffered really under no grievance at all; but if she did she had been suffering under it for a whole century—[*Nationalist cheers*]—and yet hon. Gentlemen opposite had only discovered its existence during the last few years. He could not regard the findings of the Commission as findings which were not dictated by Party bias. He did not question the honesty of the Commissioners, or their desire to ascertain the truth, but when they considered the composition of the Commission and the Reports which its members drew up, he could not help thinking that their minds were biassed by Party considerations, and that their Reports were the result of that bias. For that reason he thought that the further inquiry which the Government were about to institute was most desirable. If it were found that there was a real grievance, he felt sure that there would be a desire on his side of the House to do the best that could be done to remedy it.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said that the speech just delivered was the kind of speech that almost filled Irish Members with despair. The arguments of the hon. Member had all been answered in advance by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. He had thought that the speeches of the hon. Members for Longford, Waterford, and Plymouth had rendered it absolutely unnecessary to go over the main points of the Irish case once more. But after listening to the speech just delivered, he could come to no other conclusion but that the A B C of the Irish case still needed to be dinned into the skulls and intellects of hon. Members opposite. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member had spoken of the arrangement of 1817, and of England's taking over the "Irish debt." By what right did the hon. Member call it the "Irish debt?" He said that Irishmen borrowed the money. Ireland did not borrow it, but it was borrowed on Ireland's behalf by English Ministers, and by force of an English majority. In that transaction one of the principal stipulations of the Act of Union was violated—namely, the provision that all borrowing after the Act should be on the joint account.

By what right did the hon. and learned Member speak of Irish "debt?" At most two-thirds of what he thought proper to describe thus were a fraudulent and deliberate overcharge, which was forced upon Ireland by abominable means. [*Cheers.*] England in 1817 made itself partially responsible for her own overcharge, but that gave it no right either then or now to bring Ireland under British liabilities by a system of common taxation. [*Cheers.*] The hon. and learned Member had talked of the generosity of England in remitting four millions in 1853. Those four millions were released on the express condition that fresh taxation should be imposed, and fresh taxation was accordingly imposed which amounted up to the present to over twenty millions. [*Cheers.*] That was generosity with a vengeance! But that was not the worst. First, the annuities were remitted in return for fresh taxation imposed. But that was not the worst, for actually in 1887 an Act was passed by which they were now being repaid. [*Cheers.*] He did not know what others called that transaction, but he called it arrant swindling. [*Cheers.*] The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to-night to the drink consumed in Ireland. After the powerful and impressive speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, he (Mr. Clancy) really thought there would not be an Englishman in the House who would be bold enough to refer to the calumny again. [*Cheers.*] The hon. and learned Member had unfortunately read only one authority, the speech of the Leader of the House at Manchester, and he believed that authority, although he (Mr. Clancy) was of opinion that the Leader of the House had not read the Parliamentary Report, and although the hon. Member for Plymouth had quoted the very figures which showed that if either of the two peoples were a drunken people it was the English people. Then the hon. Member went on to say that Ireland was not entitled to separate treatment. That was very good. But Ireland sometimes did get separate treatment. [*Cheers.*] Five or six times within the last few years she had got separate treatment. When the Probate Duty Grant was distributed was Ireland treated as part of the United Kingdom or as a separate entity? [*Cheers.*] In the division of the Probate Duty Grant Ireland was distinctly recognised as a separate entity. Last year there was an Agricultural Rating Bill passed for England. If Ireland were to be treated as an English county, or a group of English counties, under that Bill her share would have been £800,000. What did she get? She got £160,000 on the ground that she was a separate taxable entity. Ireland had, in fact, not got that money yet. He had not the least doubt that in a fortnight's time the Chief Secretary for Ireland would come and save the British Exchequer a similar amount by devoting £160,000 to the endowment of the proposed Agricultural Board. He thought he had better leave the hon. and learned Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] He would only say in parting from him that he was perfectly certain he was the type of Englishman who, if he lived in the time of William III., would have said the extinction of the woollen industry of Ireland was a benefit to Ireland; who, if he lived in the time of the last century, would have approved of the practice perpetrated by English Ministers in regard to the pension list of Ireland. Perhaps he would like to know a little about it. It had some connection with the Irish Debt which the hon. Gentleman said was so generously taken over by England. It is largely composed of pensions for Englishmen and women. [*Cheers.*] There is a striking saying on this subject of John Philpot Curran which probably the hon. Gentleman never heard. He said that this list contained every description of person "from the excellence of a Hawke or a Rodney to the base situation of a lady who humbleth herself that she may be exalted." [*Nationalist cheers and laughter.*] The only thing he felt inclined to say about the speech of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment was that it was a rather curious thing for him to urge on the Unionist Party that the only solution of this question was Home Rule, considering how little that Gentleman and his Party were doing for Home Rule at present. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Liverpool, he was so much of an Imperialist he actually had no objection to being robbed if his robbery were necessary to the maintenance of the Union. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh would bear him out when he said that the hon. and gallant Member for North Down was not up to the mark of his constituents on this question. ["Hear, hear!"] At least, he was a better exponent of the opinion of the Unionists of Ireland on this question than the hon. and gallant Gentleman. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer attempted to cast ridicule on the whole thing. The right hon. Gentleman said he would not follow the hon. Member for Longford, nor the hon. Member for Waterford into the retrospect they indulged in. It was dangerous ground for the right hon. Gentleman to touch on. ["Hear, hear!"] If England had made no bargain with Ireland; if the contribution which Ireland was to pay was fair; if Ireland voluntarily entered into a bargain to that effect, apart from the injustice of taxing the poorer parts of the United Kingdom more heavily than the richer, the Irish case would have very little ground. But when a solemn bargain was entered into in 1800, and if that bargain was forced on the Irish people by the most infamous means, by bloodshed and corruption—if the taxation was unfair in 1853, and if the result of that is now that Irish taxation was extortionate, he wanted to know what answer had the right hon. Gentleman to their complaint. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Let them judge the present by the past, and there was no answer to the Irish case. The right hon. Gentleman asked what tax pinched. All the taxes pinched. [*Nationalist cheers.*] They laid upon Ireland a burden which was too great for her to bear, and which she should not bear according to the terms of the bargain England made 97 years ago. Another question dealt with by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth was the question of expenditure. He had thought after the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman they might have seen some sense of shame developed on the Government Benches or, at all events, that some effort would have been made to answer the hon. and learned Member on the subject. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not intend to travel over the same ground, but he would mention a few points which he thought would strengthen the hon. and learned Member's case. Those who opposed the Irish case said that Ireland got back her over-taxation and more; and the test of whatever she received they took as what was spent in Ireland. The proposed Inquiry he had resisted, but he was not afraid of it, because the classification of the expenditure was really the most curious piece of swindling ever practised on this Parliament. The Lord Lieutenant was surely an Imperial officer, but because the money was spent in Dublin the Lord Lieutenant's salary was put down to the Irish account. The salary of the Chief Secretary was put down to the Irish account, whether the right hon. Gentleman spent his time in Dublin or London. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: "Blocking Irish Bills."] Even the expenses of the London Office were put down as Irish expenses. All the money voted for the Queen's Civil List was spent in England, but that was not put down as to the English account. Oh, no. It was Imperial. As to Navy, he asked how many ships were being built in Ireland, Scotland and England respectively. The answer, as to Ireland, was that one vessel was being repaired there. The 20 millions spent on the Navy under the Naval Defence Act was all spent in Great Britain; but it did not go down to the English account. It was Imperial. The Speaker's salary was all spent in London. That was put down as Imperial. There was a curious item of £40,000 called the Exchequer contribution. It was established in 1890 to constitute a reserve fund of £200,000, was to be kept up until that sum was reached. Ireland had never got one penny of it yet, but it was put down to the Irish account. Surely the expenses connected with the Houses of Parliament were Imperial. But every penny of the money was spent in London. The same story was to be told in connection with many of the Government offices. The most audacious thing of all, however, was that the Office of Public Works and Buildings in Whitehall Place was put into the Imperial account. Mr. Samuels, Q.C., of the Irish Bar, although a Unionist, had written an unanswerable pamphlet on this question; and he summed up the case by saying that where the money was spent in Ireland it was sure to go to the Irish account, and where the money was spent in England it was sure to go to the Imperial account. If these accounts were made out even on the principle of charging to Ireland what was spent in Ireland, and to England what was spent in England it would be found that Ireland was overtaxed by two and three-quarter millions, the very sum estimated by the Commission. It was said that the hon. and learned Member for Longford had not suggested a remedy. It was not for the hon. and learned Member to suggest one, but for the responsible Minister of the Crown. First, however, it was necessary to get the Irish grievance admitted. Speaking only for himself, he could make a suggestion as to a remedy. He, for one, did not wish to disturb the fiscal system of the Empire; and he thought that perhaps Ireland might be compensated by being enabled to get back every year in useful and productive public works the money by the amount of which she was overtaxed. After the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech it was time to speak plainly. He declared on his responsibility that if Ireland had the power the proper answer to that speech would be an act of war. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Men and nations before this had fought for much less. Ireland believed that in this matter England had acted deliberately in a cruel and heartless manner, and when this was demonstrated to the satisfaction of every reasonable and thinking man she was confronted with a *non possumus* worthy of the worst days of British oppression. He repeated, the only proper answer to that speech would be, if they could, armed insurrection. They could not, unfortunately, resort to that remedy, but there were other means open to them of trying to get some justice for their country. If the present Government and every future Government found a system of intelligent attention being paid to every one of their Bills, whether they concerned or did not concern Irish Members, and if they found as a consequence this Imperial Parliament dislocated and disarranged, they would soon come to have another opinion about Irish taxation. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) declared that he represented the attitude of the overwhelming majority of the Unionists of Ireland [*Nationalist cheers.*] [Mr. JOHNSTON: "Not in Ulster."] Yes, in Ulster; and what was more, there was not a single constituency from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway where he could not carry by an overwhelming majority a resolution in favour of the Motion, or at all events of the question before the House. The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was one of the ablest he had ever heard him deliver, and with a great deal of it he agreed—but he thought part of that speech was directed to giving a Home Rule colour and tinge to this financial agitation. He found it was nothing of the kind. If it was he should be the last person to have anything to say to it. He confessed to the House that he looked upon this matter simply from the Irish point of view. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down and the hon. Member for South Belfast looked upon it from the English point of view, which was a proceeding he could not account for. He was an Irishman and no one could deny that a Royal Commission—he did not care in the least for what reason it was set up—had been appointed by the House to examine into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and what he said was that that jury had given a verdict for Ireland. He was told he ought to reject altogether the conclusion the Commission arrived at, because that Commission was appointed by a Home Rule Government for a Home Rule purpose. He admitted it, but sometimes good came out of evil, and he did not see why he, as an Irishman, should reject the report of that Commission, founded as it was upon the best evidence that could be brought forward, because it was appointed by a Home Rule Government for Home Rule objects, when he considered the fact that they had knocked the bottom out of Home Rule and that Home Rule was not at the present moment in view on the horizon of practical politics. Therefore he looked upon this report of a Commission of undoubtedly very able men, founded on the best evidence that could be adduced before it, as a verdict deliberately given on the side of Ireland. His hon. Friend behind him, the hon. and learned Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool (Mr. Bigham) in his excellent maiden speech, avoided the main point of the Irish contention. The hon. Member said he did not understand what taxable capacity meant. But it was upon that they founded the whole of their claim. He wished clearly to place the position he stood in and that he believed the Irish Unionists took up on this point. He did not contend that

Irishmen were overtaxed. He did not think they were, and that was why he could not follow the Amendment of the hon. Member for Longford. He did not see that they could say the Irishman was overtaxed, because he did not pay more than the Scotchman, or Welshman, or Englishman. But he said that Ireland was overtaxed according to the agreement entered into between this country and Ireland at the time of the Union, and that owing to the fact that their contributions to the Imperial revenue far exceeded the proportion they ought to pay, considering the vast wealth of their partner with whom they entered into the agreement, they had a perfect right on these grounds to say that Ireland was overtaxed. What was the agreement? He knew a good deal about the matter because an ancestor of his sat in the Irish Parliament of that time.

Mr. MACNEILL: And refused a peerage rather than vote for the Union.

Colonel SAUNDERSON: Yes; and voted against the Union. They could not help remembering that in those times it was with great difficulty that the Act of Union was passed. He need not go into details as to how it was passed, and the various inducements that were offered to many Members of that Parliament to gain their votes. But he ventured to say if hon. Members read the Debates which took place in the Irish House of Commons at that period, they would see that the great inducement offered the Irish House of Commons to accept the Union was that in joining their fate with the richer partner care would be taken that from time to time the financial condition of the two countries would be taken into consideration, and exemptions and abatements would be made to Ireland when necessary. He was a Unionist to the backbone, and he had an immense respect for the great Treaty of Union, but it was the duty of an honourable nation and an honourable Parliament to fulfil the obligations then undertaken. The logical position was this. The taxable capacity of Ireland bore a far different proportion to her revenue than was warranted by the capacity of the two countries—the one rich and the other comparatively poor. The result of the report of the Commission showed that the proportion Ireland ought to pay towards the Imperial revenue was not one-twelfth, but one-twentieth. Thus the time had arrived, contemplated by the 7th Section of the Act of Union, to reconsider the position, to make exemptions and abatements, and to fulfil the contract entered into in 1800. He did not think anyone contemplated for a moment a different system of taxation in Ireland from that which existed in England. It would be contrary to common sense, and it would not be entertained by the House of Commons, because it would involve the finances of the country in hopeless confusion. Although an Irishman was not overtaxed, although he had not to pay more for his whisky, tobacco, or tea, than an Englishman or Scotchman, yet, when they took into consideration the leaps and bounds by which this country had progressed in material wealth as compared with Ireland, it was time that consideration should be given in the House to her financial position. There would have been nothing to complain of had the revenue of Ireland not been violently increased in 1853; between 1817 and 1853, he did not think Ireland had anything to complain of; but Mr. Gladstone placed on her then a burden of two millions a year, and, as a set off, relieved her imperfectly of a sum of four millions which had been advanced. He would take this as proved, and did not think that hon. Members would attempt to deny it. He did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer last night attempted to deny it, and he did not think that anybody on the Government Bench would say the result arrived at by the Royal Commission when they found that the taxable capacity of Ireland instead of being one-twelfth was one-twentieth, was inconsistent. Objection had been taken to the word "entity," as a word of foreign invention applied to the Eastern question, and he did not like the word. But if it was a financial principle of this country to tax areas, which it was not, but if it was a financial principle to do so, then undoubtedly the taxation of Ireland would have been reduced. He was not afraid of the word "entity," and in fact Ireland had been treated as an entity in many ways. Ireland was treated as a financial entity at the end of last year, when the Agricultural Rating Act was passed, she was treated as an entity when the Church was disestablished, and again when landlords were disestablished, as they were not in this country. If Ireland was to be treated as the counties of Wiltshire and Suffolk might be treated why was she not so treated when the Agricultural Rating Act was passed? It was an argument sometimes used, which he regarded as absurd in the extreme. It was said if Ireland was a part of the Empire, as undoubtedly she was, why should not Ireland be treated as Wiltshire or any other county would be treated if it could be shown to be suffering from agricultural distress? But Wiltshire and Suffolk never had Parliaments of their own, at least not within historic times, and never made a treaty with England, therefore the argument that Ireland should be treated in the same way as Wiltshire or Suffolk was absolutely absurd. A solemn treaty was entered into with Ireland, and honourable men, when it was shown that the time had arrived for the reconsideration of the financial positions of the two countries, were bound to fulfil their solemn obligations. It was said this country had been very generous to Ireland, and in a way that had been so, but the generosity had almost invariably been at Ireland's expense. [*Laughter.*] Vicarious charity was a delightful virtue. When you wanted to satisfy Roman Catholics in Ireland you disestablished the Irish Church, sold her possessions, and converted her bishops into tramways and light railways. [*Laughter.*] When you wanted to satisfy Irish tenants you disestablished Irish landlords—[*Laughter*]—and soon they were to be disendowed altogether. This was a principle of generosity by which at any rate England had no right to expect the general thanks of Ireland, the fattening of one Irishman on another. [*Laughter.*] At last there was an opportunity for England to be generous to Ireland at England's expense. In every Debate it was attempted to be shown that Ireland had not much to complain of, and that on the casting up of accounts it would be found that Ireland perhaps enjoyed rather more of the money voted by Parliament than either Scotland or England. He looked upon that as a dangerous argument, and he was surprised that it should be used by Unionists. He could understand hon. Gentlemen opposite using it, for it was a Separatist argument. When the exchequers of the two countries were amalgamated in 1817 it was distinctly laid down that all expenditure by the State in Ireland, in Gibraltar, or elsewhere, should be regarded as Imperial expenditure, and it was tending in a Separatist direction to draw up separate accounts for England, Scotland, and Ireland. That was why he was opposed to the instruction to the new Commission, because he looked upon it as tending in a Separatist direction. There was no necessity for a new Commission, for it had been already proved on the very best evidence that the taxable capacity of Ireland and her contributions to the Imperial revenues were not in fair proportion, and that Ireland was overtaxed in comparison with her richer sister. Some foolish things had no doubt been said in Ireland on this subject. One was that, if attention was not paid to Ireland's demand, Unionists would reconsider their ways and policy. There was no foundation for that statement. Irish Unionism was not to be bought or sold. ["Hear, hear!"] What was true was that never before in this century had a movement been supported with such unanimity in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] He could not himself accept the resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Longford as it stood, because he did not see how Irishmen, man for man, could reasonably claim to be treated differently from their fellow-subjects, and because he could not assent to the doctrine that Ireland had not the same interest in the Army and Navy as England and Scotland. To Irishmen the greatness of this Empire ought to be just as dear as it was to any Englishman or Scotchman. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: "Who gets the booty?"] Without the Army and Navy where would Ireland and Ireland's commerce be? [*Nationalist laughter.*] He did not come to the British Parliament to plead *in formâ pauperis.* ["Hear, hear!"] It grieved him to hear hon. Members speaking of Ireland as if she had made no progress at all, and of Irishmen as if they were a set of beggars crying out for alms. He affirmed that

Ireland had made great progress, but that progress was not as great as England's, and it was to rectify the difference that they asked for generous treatment at the hands of Parliament. Ireland's representatives asked this country to do that which it ought to be proud to do—namely, to fulfil the great and solemn obligation entered into at the time of the Union. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said that he rose to rectify a statement which had been made more than once in that Debate. It had been said that the whole opinion of Ireland was unanimous on this question. He ventured to traverse that statement, not in his own name, but on behalf of his constituents. He should like the House to know that this issue had been discussed at great length by every single one of the public bodies with which he had come in contact in the City of Belfast. It had been discussed by the Belfast Conservative Association, the Primrose League, the Chamber of Commerce, and by the Ulster Liberal Unionist Association. These had not been mere perfunctory discussions, but in each case the matter had been referred to a competent committee which after due deliberation, had expressed its view in moderate, and he thought, reasonable terms, all of which were practically uniform in their tenour. What was the view taken by his constituents? He would read first the resolution arrived at by the Conservative Association, which was the most important political body in Belfast:—

> "Your Committee would caution the Unionists of Ulster not to be led away by the present agitation against the alleged over-taxation of Ireland."

The Primrose League which was a body entitled to be heard as representing a considerable number of persons, said:—

> "That it is to be regretted that many Irish Unionists have accepted, apparently without due consideration, the report of the majority of the Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland. That it has yet to be shown that any individual living in Ireland is more heavily taxed than if he lived in Great Britain. That the proposal to establish the principle of separate taxable areas is most undesirable, and might be extended indefinitely. That any change in the fiscal system of the United Kingdom, involving reductions of duty paid in Ireland, and the consequent creation of Customs barriers between Great Britain and Ireland has not been shown to be necessary, and from a Unionist standpoint would be most undesirable."

He now came to the Chamber of Commerce, which had no political complexion, and the Chamber was quite clear on the subject. They declared:—

> "In our opinion Great Britain and Ireland must be treated as two countries having a common financial system. We are most strongly of opinion that to hold that for the present day and in the future Great Britain and Ireland must be treated as separate financial entities, except for the purpose of considering the particular exemptions or abatements to be made in Ireland whenever circumstances require them, would be contrary to the intention and provisions of the Act of Union. The foregoing facts and considerations do not afford grounds for advocating the adoption of a differential scale of duties for the two countries, but it would appear to us that these facts and considerations are sufficient to justify a claim upon the Imperial Parliament for special treatment, in the matter of wise and liberal expenditure in directions in which it can be arranged to be really reproductive."

And lastly he came to what to his mind was the strongest and at the same time the most weighty of all the quotations with which he desired to trouble the House. That was the quotation which expressed the opposition of the Ulster Liberal Unionist Association, which contained many of the foremost leaders of thought in the North of Ireland. They said:—

> "We regret that use had been made of some of the findings of the Commission to start an agitation in Ireland for redress of an imaginary grievance, and to give rise to extravagant claims and expectations that can only result in disappointment and discredit. . . . We strongly object to any such plan as taking separate accounts of the revenue and expenditure of the different members of the United Kingdom, with a view to proportional distribution, and we are unable to see that on such accounts any estimate can be arrived at which will support the claim for remission to Ireland of any measured amount as due to her on balance of account with Great Britain. On the contrary, we think the result of such an investigation is to show that Ireland's contribution to common Imperial charges is smaller than her due proportion viewed by any standard of comparison. . . . The statement that Ireland have been impoverished and drained of her means by over-taxation will not bear examination."

He thought he had said enough to justify his assertion that there was a section in

Ireland opposed to the Motion, a section of which he did not wish to exaggerate the importance, which did not see eye to eye with the hon. and learned Member who introduced this Motion. He wished himself to endorse the view of the Ulster Liberal Unionist Association that nothing was gained by putting forward claims which were extravagant or raising expectations which could not be fulfilled. The only result, he concurred with them in thinking, must be disappointment and discredit. He believed that the claims as they had been presented that evening had been extravagant and had been presented in a way which those who presented them could hardly feel was calculated to attain the object they professed to have in view. He believed it was absolutely no good to hold a pistol at the head of Great Britain in order to make her disgorge what they were told were her ill-gotton gains. ["Hear, hear!"] He was certain from what he knew of the constitutional temperament of this country, that if they adopt the method of claiming, as a matter of right, something which Great Britain did not feel that it was her duty to give, they would fail absolutely in their object, and would do a great deal more mischief than good. He would like to state, what appeared to him, the extraordinary weakness of the case presented to the House. They had been told that Ireland was over taxed—that Irishmen were over-taxed as compared with Englishmen and Scotchmen. They were told that the fiscal system of the United Kingdom was unjust to Ireland; they were told that the whisky duty was oppressive, that the Act of Union prescribed exemptions and abatements, and that Irish expenditure was extravagant. What were the solutions that had been offered? Surely if a man was over-taxed, the way to give relief was to under-tax him. But no one suggested that they should take a brass farthing off the taxes in Ireland. He defied any Member to suggest a tax which he would get half-a-dozen Members of his Party to agree to reduce. It was said individual Irishmen were over-taxed, but at the very outset of the Report they were met with the statement that while the taxation in Great Britain was £2 11s. 5d. per head, in Ireland it was only £1 13s. 5d., or 18s. less. He believed the fiscal system was in some respects injurious to Ireland and to a great many parts of Great Britain too, but the hon. Member for Dublin told them there was not the slightest intention of altering that system. No doubt in a certain sense the whisky duty was oppressive, but nobody proposed to take a penny of it off. The Act of Union prescribed abatements and exemptions, but who had suggested that any exemptions or abatements should be undertaken by the Imperial Exchequer? Lastly, they were told that Irish expenditure was extravagant, but surely if that were so the logical thing to do was to reduce it. He was strongly of opinion that it would be desirable and legitimate to use any retrenchment that could be made in Irish expenditure for the benefit of Ireland itself. But it was, he thought, most illogical to allege all these grievances and then not in one single instance propose to take the obvious steps to apply a remedy. What it really came to was this, that if relief was to be given to Ireland it was to be given by extra taxation imposed upon Great Britain. That was the contention of hon. Members; they said there ought to be annual gifts to Ireland. That might be desirable, but it was a very odd way of giving relief to a Kerry or Clare peasant to pay additional salaries to officials in Dublin or Belfast. It had been said that Great Britain had robbed Ireland, but Lord Farrer, who had been foremost in supporting the conclusions of the Report, said that one thing certain was that neither England nor Scotland had made a penny out of the fiscal arrangement which was now complained of. What was the logical conclusion to which they were irresistibly led? If it be true, and he thought it was, that the main propositions of the Commission, namely, that in view of her scanty means the taxation of Ireland was excessive, what was the natural way out of the difficulty? Ireland, an agricultural and poor country, was suffering from our present fiscal system. We had adopted the fiscal plan of putting the enormous bulk of our taxation upon the imported necessaries consumed in almost equal quantities by the rich and the poor, and the result was that we were putting a considerable strain upon the resources of very poor men. If that were so, what was a proper system of relief? If the taxes upon tea and tobacco, for instance, were heavy, if it was unwise or oppressive to raise revenue by taxes upon necessaries imported in very large quantities, surely the logical outcome was to take taxes off necessaries and put others on luxuries. If it were desired to raise revenue, he could easily furnish a list of articles which were neither necessaries of life nor raw material for manufacture, articles which would furnish, to a large extent, the revenue which would be sacrificed if we reduced or abolished the whole or any part of the duties upon tea and tobacco.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

MILITARY LANDS ACTS (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

As amended, considered; read the Third time, and passed.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 26th April.

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. T. M. HEALY moved the Second Reading of this Bill, which, he said, had met with no opposition.

MR. CARSON supported the Bill, which would be of considerable service. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR did not oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, on the distinct understanding that it was to be referred to a Select Committee. He would not bind the Government to accept the principle of the Bill until they had had on opportunity of considering the Select Committee's Report.

Read a Second time, and committed to a Select Committee.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE-

On the Motion, "That this House do now adjourn,"

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) asked what was the intention of the Government as to the future course of business? He thought it would be clear from the course of the Debate that night, that it would be quite impossible for anything like half the Members who had given time and attention to the subject, to speak if the Debate was to be concluded the next night. He understood that his hon. Friend the Member for Islington, who took a great interest in this subject, as well as in the Military Works Bill, would not oppose the Second Reading of the latter if Thursday were given for the continuation of the discussion on the Resolution of the Member for Longford. Therefore it would not be a waste of time on the part of the Government if they would give Thursday as well as Wednesday to the purposes of Debate. He hoped that the Leader of the House would be able to say that another day would be given.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) contended that the House had been generous to the Government, not only in the amount of time given them, but also in the manner in which Government Measures had been treated; in fact, the Government had been singularly fortunate in the conduct of business during the present Session. The fact that the Address to the Queen's Speech was voted within a single week was partly due to the promise that was given of sufficient time in which to Debate this question of the financial relations. It appeared to him that in regard to a great historical Debate such as this, the concession of only one day of Government time was entirely inadequate, and he would firmly but respectfully press upon the Government the advisability of giving up Thursday. Having regard to the interest which this subject had excited in Ireland, and the general volume of desire that there was to discuss it, he contended that they were entitled to the concession they asked for. So strong was the desire from all parts of the House to discuss this subject that, so far as they were concerned, the speeches had been confined to two hon. Members, that being due to the liberal desire on the part of the Chair that views should be presented fairly from both sides of the House. He therefore thought it was reasonable that Thursday should be conceded to them by the Government.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) said he had always recognised an arrangement made with the authorised spokesmen of the Irish Party as an arrangement which needed no endorsement, but he would point out the difficulty in which they stood. He admitted that the House had been thrown into a difficulty by the inordinate length of the speeches which had been made. If any large proportion of hon. Members were, in addressing the House, to give an abstract of the various Reports of the Royal Commission, and were then to survey the financial history of England and Ireland from the year 1800, or perhaps earlier, to the present day, and to append thereto their own comments upon the present position of Ireland and its future prospects, it would be almost impossible ever to bring the Debate to an end. He himself had intended to take part in that Debate, and he had hoped that his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, who had had a great deal to do with the earlier stages of this controversy, would have been able to address the House that night. He had recognised, however, that that was impossible, and he had asked his right hon. Friend to take the place which he himself should otherwise have occupied in concluding the Debate on the following day on behalf of the Government. While he recognised the desire of hon. Gentlemen opposite to make out the best case they could for the country from which they came, he hoped, in the interest, not of the convenience of the Government, but of the convenience of the House, the hon. Member for North Louth would not press his request which would upset a fixed arrangement, but would not have the effect of bringing before the country any possible argument that had not been already threshed out in the course of the Debate. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. LOUGH was intensely sorry to hear that the right hon. Gentleman did not intend to join in the Debate. ["Hear, hear!"] That was a loss which they would not be able to make good hereafter. The subject was one of gigantic importance, and the Debate would be historic. There had been no opportunity since 1817 to discuss the question; and now that a Royal Commission had been working on the subject for two or three years, to grudge another day to the Debate seemed to him a false economy of time.

House Adjourned at Twenty Minutes after Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 31st March 1897.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Order Read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [29th March],

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the Report and Proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland establish the existence of an undue burden of taxation on Ireland, which constitutes a great grievance to all classes of the Irish community, and makes it the duty of the Government to propose at an early day remedial legislation: "—*(Mr. Blake:)*—

And which Amendment was to leave out from the word "House," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words

> "so long as the Exchequers of Great Britain and Ireland remain consolidated all portions of the United Kingdom must be regarded as forming one country for fiscal purposes, and if any genuine and tangible grievance does exist, it can only be satisfactorily removed by so adjusting the present fiscal system as to render it just and equitable to all persons in whatever part of the United Kingdom they may reside." —*(Mr. Whittaker.)*

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." Debate resumed.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) continuing the speech which was interrupted when the Debate was adjourned on Tuesday at midnight, asked leave to sum up very briefly the points he had endeavoured to make. In the first place it was totally incorrect to say that the opinion of Ireland was universally in favour of the view of the hon. Member for Longford. He claimed to have shown that almost every section in the city of Belfast, at any rate, had declared itself, after full consideration, to be of a contrary opinion. He agreed with his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh that, while there had been great exaggeration with regard to the alleged hardship inflicted by Britain on Ireland in the past, there was at the present moment neither over-taxation of any individual nor tangible injustice. He believed that the people of Great Britain would not tax themselves to remove an imaginary injustice or to undo a non-existent wrong. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to the general case which was made against Great Britain on a claim of right, it failed if on no other ground, from its inherent absurdity and want of logic. It was said that Ireland was overtaxed, but no one proposed to reduce her taxes by a farthing. It was said that Irishmen were over-taxed, but it was admitted that Irishmen were taxed far more lightly than either Englishmen or Scotsmen. It was said that the fiscal system of the United Kingdom was unjust, but they had been told point-blank that it was impossible and undesirable to change that system. It was said that the whisky tax was a cruel burden on Ireland, but no one proposed to reduce that tax. It was said that the Act of Union prescribed exemptions and abatements, but no speaker in the course of the Debate had even suggested what those abatements ought to be, or whether there ought to be any. Lastly, they were told that Great Britain was robbing Ireland, and yet they had the positive assurance of Lord Farrer, the chief witness in favour of the Motion, that neither England nor Scotland profited to the extent of one shilling by the revenues raised in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] In view of these facts the claim, as a claim of right, seemed to him to fall to the ground. Whether there did not remain a claim of another character was a different question. He believed that there did remain such a claim. He believed that the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and the Belfast Liberal Unionist Association were right in saying that, in the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, a peculiar and generous expenditure was warranted by the circumstances of the country. That Irish expenditure might be reduced he did not doubt, and he gladly noted the promise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that any saving made in that quarter should be devoted to Irish purposes. Moreover, by our land legislation and in other ways, we had produced an artificial state of things in Ireland which could only be removed by an expenditure of money which would permit of a return to a normal condition of things. We had taken away the springs of initiative, and it was our duty to restore them. He believed that Parliament would be perfectly ready in the future, as it had frequently shown itself in the past, to take a most generous view of the needs of Ireland. [" Hear, hear ! "] In pressing them to do so he should be absolutely fulfilling the commission he had received from his constituents. He should be misinterpreting their view if he were to join in the demand, or rather in the menace, which had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Longford, a demand which he believed to be based upon inadequate grounds, and one which, if it were conceded, would inevitably lead to that disintegration of the United Kingdom which they had fought so hard and so successfully to prevent. [" Hear, hear ! "]

Mr. THOMAS LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the Debate up to the present had taken a strange and unexpected course. They had had only one speech from the Liberal Benches, and that speech of the hon. Member for Spen Valley might be summed up in three expressions, namely, that England displayed the greatest generosity to Ireland, that Ireland displayed the utmost prosperity, and that the Report of the Royal Commission was on a flimsy basis, and that its recommendations were preposterous. That appeared to be the Liberal Home Rule position; but he thought it left something to be desired, and he was sorry that the Party pledged to the relief of Irish grievances should allow two evenings to pass in the discussion of the Report of a Royal Commission appointed by the Liberal Government without some expression of opinion being given to them. [" Hear, hear ! "] The hon. Member who had just sat down described the Motion of the Member for Longford as a menace. He did not find anything menacing in it. It seemed to be a very modest Motion, which simply asked the House to consider the Report of the Royal Commission. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for Spen Valley might have allowed the House to discuss the Motion for a day or two, so that the country might understand the position before introducing his Amendment. The hon. Member said he was a Home Ruler, but he would not admit that Ireland should be treated as a separate fiscal entity. If the hon. Member were a Home Ruler he might be glad to accept anything which would be a step towards autonomy. The separate fiscal entity of Ireland had been recognised already up to this day. It was not only embodied in the Act of Union but in the Act of 1816, and was perpetually recognised by the Government of both political parties all through the century. The hon. Member said Ireland had prospered greatly since 1850, and instead of dealing with the startling figures given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford, who moved the Motion, he supported his statement by only two references, namely, the exports and imports of Ireland. He was quite right in saying that the exports and imports were far heavier now than a century ago, but they did not support his argument, but gave the most pathetic evidence of the suffering that Ireland endured. [*Cheers.*] It was absolutely necessary to examine these exports and imports to arrive at a conclusion. The exports consisted of fat cattle, pigs, and poultry, which were exported in order to enable the people to import food of a lower quality in order to pay the great burden that rested upon them with the difference. He compared these exports and imports with what had gone on half a century ago. Then there were no imports of food. Ireland fed herself—[*cheers*]—and whatever little was exported was a genuine export. The next point of the hon. Member was the Income Tax return. He said that in 1856 the assessment in Ireland was 21 millions, whereas now it was 27 millions, and he said that that was evidence of the marvellous prosperity of Ireland. These figures represented an increase during 40 years of 30 per cent. In Great Britain in the first year the hon. Member mentioned, the Income Tax was 286 millions; it was now about 700 millions so that while the Irish returns had improved by 30 per cent., the British had improved by 140 per cent. The hon. Member did not refer at all to the diminution of the population, nor to the increase in pauperism, nor in lunacy. He simply gave the two cases, and on these he based his argument that Ireland's prosperity was marvellous. He would not characterise the expressions used by the hon. Member (Mr. Whittaker) about the Report of the Royal Commission being flimsy and its recommendations preposterous, except to say that they were very strong expressions for a Member who voted in favour of Ireland from 1892 to 1895. He could not but regret that the hon. Member took up such a fierce tone towards Ireland. The Tory view, as expressed from the Benches opposite, was very different from that of the hon. Member. It was at least something sympathetic. The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a happy contrast to that of the hon. Member, though it must have been unsatisfactory to Members from Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the burden of Ireland was heavy but not borne. The amount paid by Ireland was enough to ruin the country and make it impossible to go on with the fiscal system. The Chancellor of the Exchequer went on to say that there was no complaint between the year 1817 and the year 1853. He thought there was a great deal of complaint and a great deal of grievance during those years. The right hon. Gentleman said the complaints about 1853 was an historical grievance; he said that the burden that was pressed upon Ireland in 1853 had been renewed in the last Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The history of the fiscal relations was this, Englishmen had been discovering for a hundred years how to oppress Ireland, and every idea upon the subject was embodied in the Budget and pressed upon Ireland. What occurred in 1853 was not merely historical but an act of living oppression. [*Cheers.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer asked, "What tax do you complain of?" There was no answer.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Yes; I said every tax pinches.

MR. LOUGH: The hon. Member said he was prepared to accept a continuance of the fiscal system.

MR. CLANCY said he never said anything of the kind.

MR. LOUGH was glad to be corrected by the hon. Gentleman, but he said he was prepared to accept a continuance of the fiscal system if large sums of money were spent in Ireland. It was impossible to debate this policy of giving back a large sum of money to Ireland. The tobacco tax, the tea tax, and the income tax were all oppressive in Ireland; and the immediate reduction of taxation was the way out of the difficulty. [MR. W. JOHNSTON: "What about the whisky tax?"] All the money required for Ireland out of indirect taxation should be obtained from the tax on alcohol. This Debate had had too much of an historic character. The English people, he knew, believed that their circumstances were in part similar to those in Ireland; that the fiscal system which they had developed suited them, and that, therefore, it must be beneficial to Ireland. But the evil was that the system which had gradually grown up, while being fair to Great Britain, pressed the life-blood out of Ireland. The principles of that system were: firstly, to select a small number of articles for taxation; secondly, to select articles largely consumed in Ireland; and, thirdly, to provide for the required increases not by adding to the number of taxable articles, but by raising the taxes on the articles already selected. No more cruel system for Ireland could possibly be devised. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was quite right in saying that great relief in taxation was given at the beginning of the period from 1817. But that relief applied solely to Great Britain, not to Ireland. In 1816 there was an income tax of 14 millions pressing on Great Britain and not on Ireland. That, representing a charge of £1 4s. per head of the population of Great Britain, was swept away. Other taxes not levied in Ireland, and remitted at this time were taxes of 7s. per 1,000 on bricks, 13s. per 1,000 on tiles; the glass tax; the window tax; the heavy corn laws, which did not affect Ireland; the soap tax, and the candle tax. When these taxes were repealed, they were replaced by a common system of taxation by which Ireland was hit a very heavy blow. Out of 25 great articles taxed in England in 1617, only 8 were taxed in Ireland. Of those 25, only five now remained; so that 20 taxes were remitted in Great Britain and only three in Ireland. In Great Britain, 23s. 7d. per head of the population was levied by these taxes; that had been reduced now to 7d. per head. In Ireland 2s. 6d. per head of the population was levied on the eight taxes, now it was 4d. per head. Therefore, the English people got relief to the extent of 23s. per head, while the Irish people got relief only to the extent of 2s. 2d. per head. To see the operation of this relief it was necessary to take a long period. He would take that from 1815 to 1845. In the interval the taxation of Great Britain was reduced by 22 millions, although the population doubled. In the same period the taxation levied in Ireland increased one quarter of a million, although the country was sinking to the verge of the most dreadful famine. [Mr. LECKY: "The population was increasing."] Yes, but exactly in the same proportion as in England, so there was nothing in that. He would admit that there was kindness at the bottom of the attitude of English Members, but there was not enough knowledge or thought. Thus the taxes which had been retained were the great Irish taxes. The first was the tea tax. That was equalised in 1817, which meant that while it was reduced in Great Britain it was increased in Ireland. In 1819 the tobacco tax was equalised. It had previously been only 1s. in the 1lb. in Ireland, and it was gradually raised to 12s.; and now it squeezed one and a quarter millions out of the poorest people in Europe. These, with the stamp duty in 1841, prevented the Irish people from getting any relief after the war. It would be said that Ireland got some relief because a number of her taxes were removed. But if 12 taxes were reduced to six, and more was collected from the six than had been formerly collected from the 12, there was no relief given, especially if those six taxes were on the necessaries of life. He had read in *The Times* that morning an unpleasant criticism on the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. *The Times* said:—

> "Nor does he pause for a moment to consider that this increase (of taxation) in Ireland is due to the increased consuming power of the people."

The increase was not due to that cause. It was due to the fact that the taxes had been raised. It was quite possible to get more out of a tax from a people who were sinking in wealth and numbers, by increasing the tax in greater proportion than the wealth and population diminished. The taxes of 1853 were quadrupled because there were only half as many people on whom to levy taxation. The total taxation in Great Britain in 1815 was £2 8s. 7d. per head of the population, and at the end of the 30 years period it was only £1 4s. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that a great relief had been given in Britain; but it did not extend to Ireland. In 1819 the Irish amount was only 11s.; in 1896 the Irish total was £1 2s. As to the spirit duties, the First Lord of the Treasury stated that the increased tax on spirits was made for philanthropic purposes, while the right hon. Member for Bodmin said it was a tax to curb a vice. But if they wanted to curb a vice they did not attempt it in Great Britain because the tax on spirits was there decreased. The tax on beer at the beginning of the period was twopence in Ireland and fivepence in Great Britain, but in 1830 it was reduced to twopence in Great Britain, and no relief was given to Ireland. The tax on spirits in Great Britain at the beginning of the same period was 11s. 8d., now it was only 10s. 6d. Britain used a great deal more foreign spirits than Ireland. At the beginning of the period the tax on foreign spirits was 22s. 7d., in 1845 17s., and in 1860, 10s. 6d. There was, therefore, no principle recognised here, either of curbing vice or putting the tax on for philanthropic purposes.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I did not say that. What I said was that anyone dealing with the incidence of the duties on alcohol could not forget that there was a philanthropic side to all such taxes.

MR. LOUGH said the right hon. Gentleman suggested that it was for the benefit of the people this was done, but if the opposite course were taken in England, then it knocked the bottom out of the right hon. Gentleman's argument. [*Cheers.*] There had been gradually brought into existence a fiscal system, which, while it taxed the people of Britain in the most easy and genial way, crushed the life out of the people of Ireland. This system had been perfected in another cruel way lately. The system had been adopted in the last 15 years of collecting more by this unequal taxation than was necessary; and after it was collected it was given back in grants in aid.

In the collection the Government got more than they required, and those grants in aid were given not impartially all round, but were given to Great Britain. In 1890 the licence duty was given to the local authorities here; it had never been given in Ireland; the Irish sum would amount to £300,000 a year. In 1896 the Government gave a grant of two millions to help agriculture, and this Session they have given £600,000 to help English education, but no equivalent had been given to help education in Ireland. Look at the system and its effects first from the financial and then from the material standpoint. Financially, the Report of the Royal Commission informed us of the growth of local taxation in Ireland, as well as Imperial taxation, and it showed that the whole burden was 12 millions a year collected in the island, whereas only two millions were collected from the same number of people at the beginning of the period. As to the material result, take definite periods at the end, and see the effect produced in Ireland. The first period was from 1837 to 1897, the years of the Queen's reign. The dark spot in the history of that reign, memorable as it had otherwise been, would be this country's treatment of Ireland. [*Cheers.*] The population of Great Britain was 17 millions; it was now 35 millions. In Ireland the population was then eight millions; it was now four and a-half millions. In the last 40 or 50 years of the reign, Ireland had experienced the most cruel treatment from different Governments. In the first year of the reign all the taxes levied in Ireland, local and Imperial, were 15s. 6d. per head; in the last year of the reign the taxes were 53s. per head. [*Cheers.*] It might be said that the people were richer now; no, they were poorer. Then agriculture was flourishing. Ireland exported provisions to this country, but now all the industries of Ireland, except three or four, had been destroyed, and the country was less able to bear taxation. Then all the food of the country was produced at home, so that the people were able to export their surplus, whereas now they brought in the cheapest food procurable in any part of the world. All the manufactures used in the country were then made in the country, but they had all now been swept out of the country. Those two facts proved that the material wealth of the people had greatly diminished, while that in Great Britain had increased in the most extraordinary way. In the first year of the reign every person in England paid 4s. of taxes for every 1s. paid in Ireland; but in this year 1s. 8s. was only paid in Great Britain for every 1s. paid in Ireland. From 1864 to 1894 the vital statistics of population, pauperism, lunatics, deaf and dumb, blind, showed that Ireland was getting worse as the years passed by. While pauperism between 1870 and 1894 increased in Ireland by 40 per cent., it decreased in Great Britain by 26 per cent. Take the period from 1880 to 1896. The highest level of pauperism reached per thousand of the population before 1879 was 62 in Ireland, but in 1881 it reached 113 per thousand. Since 1880, when Liberal legislation began, the pauperism had never sunk below 80 per thousand. The population fell by 635,000 in those 15 years. If the same number of lunatics remained in the country at the end of the 15 years, with the population so much reduced, it would be a dreadful figure; but there had been an increase of 5,373 during the period of 15 years, and a steady increase of taxation had gone on to 12s. 4d. per head. Rents had been reduced one and a-half millions, but the taxes had been increased by one and three-quarter millions; so that what they gained in one way they lost in another. The present Leader of the House had been closely connected with Irish administration for about 10 years. The right hon. Gentleman ought to ask himself whether the progress of the island could be considered to have been satisfactory during that period. During the right hon. Gentleman's connection with Ireland 350,000 more people left the island. Previously the highest number of emigrants per thousand, even in famine years, had never been more than 115, but in 1886 the total number per thousand rose to 129; and since the right hon. Gentleman's rule in Ireland began the average pauperism per thousand of the population had never fallen below 90. So that he had added another 10 per cent. to the appalling figures of pauperism. Eight shillings per head had been added to the taxation during that period. Not more than 11 millions was ever levied before the right hon. Gentleman went to Ireland, but 12 millions were now being wrung out of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had often said that Ireland had grievances long ago, but that they were now only historical, having been remedied by the kindness of England. The Report of the Commission disposed of that argument, and the appalling figures showing the increase of taxation in recent years, the increase of pauperism, and the decline of the population, suggested that the oppression upon Ireland now was greater than at any period of her past history. In 1896 39,000 people left Ireland, and even since the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission the taxation of Ireland had increased by £600,000. Therefore, while the Government were saying that they were considering that Report, they were not really doing so. They had, in fact, pronounced judgment against Ireland, and were imposing taxation greater by £600,000 than any taxation imposed in any period covered by the Report of the Commissioners. The reduction of rents in Ireland proved her growing poverty. He would be the last to deny the hard measure that had been dealt out to the landlords by that House. The landlords had made great sacrifices, but these sacrifices had not done any good to the country, because what the landlord had been asked to forego, the greedy Government had seized. ["Hear, hear!"] Any reduction in relief of taxation ought to be given to the landlords in fair proportion to the relief given to the tenants, and it was unjust to cut down rents in court, and then to send the taxgatherer to take fresh taxes from the people. The Savings Banks Returns were relied upon by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who maintained that the condition of Ireland had improved. They said that during 20 years the deposits in the Savings Banks had increased by nine or ten millions. But they overlooked the fact that the investments in Government stock in Ireland had decreased by the same amount. Any growth of the deposits in the Savings Banks could not be regarded as a proof of progress. It was a proof of fear; the people were afraid to invest their money in the land. The Savings Banks Returns, therefore, could not be said to prove that things were mending. He asked the House to look forward for 10 or 15 years, and to consider what would then be the state of Ireland if the present policy were continued. In 15 years there would be in Ireland a population of only three and three-quarter millions, and the Government would be trying to wring 15 millions of taxation out of that population. They would be engaged in the most dreadful task ever undertaken by any civilised Government. In 1837 Ireland had a population of eight millions, and the total cost of government was only one million and three-quarters, but to-day the expenditure had grown to six millions, although the population was only four and a half millions. In 1837 the constabulary cost £350,000; to-day the cost was £1,500,000. Education to-day cost £1,200,000, the Post Office £800,000, the law charges were £700,000, the central government cost £1,500,000, and the contribution to local taxation was £350,000. Barring the items for education and the Post Office what benefit did the mass of the population derive from this huge expenditure? A vast proportion of the cost of government in Ireland was wasted in huge, extravagant salaries, and upon offices which were not required. He believed that the Government were, at that moment, maturing a scheme for the establishment of yet another Board in Ireland. He asked them to consider whether it was really wise to proceed with that scheme. Would it not be better to adopt instead some plan which would give real relief to the people? ["Hear, hear!"] He contended that if it was right to regard the expenditure on the constabulary and for administrative purposes in Ireland as a fair charge upon that country, a large proportion of Imperial expenditure—such as the money spent in building ships, and on the Army and Navy—ought to be treated as local to England. Then there was the Civil List. To that Ireland had to contribute £75,000 a year. During the 60 years of the Queen's reign she had contributed altogether £4,250,000; yet the Queen had only spent 16 days in Ireland. Every day that the Sovereign had spent in Ireland had cost the country £250,000, and of this Ireland paid her full share. The cost of the Lord Lieutenant's household was not shared by Great Britain. This showed that perfect fairness had not been observed in making out these accounts.

There was only one cure for the evils of which he had spoken—the reduction or abolition of taxes which pressed with such terrible effect on the Irish taxpayer. He would take the tax off tobacco, tea, and also abolish the income tax. The First Lord of the Treasury had more power to help Ireland than any other Minister had had. The time was getting short. If anything were to be done it must be done soon, for the emergency was most pressing. The people were suffering in the most grievous way. They had heard of a lunatic asylum which contained 300 more people than it would properly hold. The fact was, the people were being driven mad with oppression. How could they better celebrate the long reign of Her Majesty the Queen, so splendid in many of its aspects, than by doing something to remedy grievances which were eating into the heart of Ireland? The reason the First Lord of the Treasury had succeeded so badly in Ireland was that he had not rightly diagnosed the evils under which Ireland suffered. The true evil in Ireland was poverty, and that had been increased by the hopeless efforts of Ireland to bear the heavy charges put upon her by her richer sister. The right hon. Gentleman had now a splendid opportunity of dealing with this evil, and if, by dealing with it in a broad and bold way, he could effect a drastic and effectual remedy, no one would rejoice more than he should to see the right hon. Gentleman's name linked with the most distinguished of those who had held the high position which he occupied. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. LECKY (Dublin University) said he thought there had been a great deal of exaggeration in the course of the Debate in the pictures that had been drawn of the present state of Ireland, but at the same time he thought there was a large amount of common agreement among the different Irish parties, and that the overwhelming majority of the Irish Unionists would go a long way with hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Irish cheers.*] They were all impressed with the general result of the late Commission, which was that whereas the taxable capacity of Ireland was put by no one higher than one-twentieth part of that of Great Britain, the taxation in Ireland was really between one-eleventh and one-twelfth. This fact had sunk into the minds of people of all classes, and it would be a great mistake if the Government treated it as a matter of insignificance. When they remembered that it rested not only on the authority of distinguished Irishmen, but also on the authority of such English experts as Mr. Childers, Lord Welby, Lord Farrer, and Mr. Currie, who were supported by Sir Robert Giffen, the first statistician in England, and perhaps in Europe, it was impossible to deny its gravity. It was fully corroborated by Sir David Barbour in his very able dissentient Report, though he contended that the Report of the Majority was not a complete statement of the case, and that you could not decide the question of taxation without considering at the same time how that taxation was expended. Another point on which they were generally agreed was that in financial matters, as in other branches of legislation, Ireland ought to be treated as Ireland, and not as a mere group of English counties. [*Irish cheers.*] Whatever else might be doubtful in this matter, there could be no reasonable doubt that constitutionally and historically Ireland had the right, not only under the Act of Union and under the Consolidating Act of 1817, but also according to all the precedents of British legislation, to have separate treatment in financial matters. [*Irish cheers.*] A great deal had been said about the terms financial "unity" and "entity." If they were reasonably defined, he, for his part, had no objection to use them. But he observed that in Belfast there had been a strong protest against these terms, and the Belfast Liberal Association and the Belfast Chamber of Commerce had adopted another expression. They said that under the express terms of the Act of Union, repeated in 1816, Ireland had a constitutional claim for a separate consideration of her financial position. If the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and the Belfast Liberal Association preferred to put it in that way he did not object. He only admired the metaphysical subtlety that could find any real difference between these two things. It was not necessary, after the encyclopædical speech of the hon. and learned Member for Longford, to go at any length into the historical side of the case. Even when the amalgamation of the Exchequers was carried out it was subject under the Act of Union to such particular exemptions and abatements in the case of Ireland and Scotland as circumstances might appear from time to time to demand. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was very difficult to understand what the authors of the Act of Union meant by these words. Lord Castlereagh put it very clearly in the speech in which he proposed the Union and explained its terms. He said:—

> "Ireland has by this means the utmost possible security that she cannot be taxed beyond the measure of her comparative ability, and that the ratio of her contribution must ever correspond with her relative wealth and prosperity."

Ireland was not found capable of paying her full share between the Union and the year 1816. This was partly due to the contribution of Ireland having been placed too high, but mainly, he thought, to the fact that the great war had carried with it an enormous expenditure which, if Ireland had had a separate Parliament must have driven her to bankruptcy. The debt was ultimately taken over by Great Britain. He did not agree that there was anything fraudulent in the fixing of Ireland's contribution by the authors of the Union. It was simply a mistake in the calculation. Nor did he believe that the amalgamation of the Exchequers was a criminal thing. He believed it was the best thing that could have been done for Ireland. When the amalgamation was made it was done with the clearest possible statement that the exemptions and abatements which the Union Treaty laid down were to be continued under the new state of things. He did not know whether hon. Members were aware how very largely exemptions and abatements were at this time granted to Ireland. For several years there were taxes amounting to 20 millions which were imposed on Great Britain, and from which Ireland was exempted. As late as 1845 the exemptions amounted to con-considerably more than 14 millions. All these exemptions clearly recognised Ireland as a distinct unity. Taxes imposed in England were imposed on every part of England whether rich or poor. The exemptions were Irish exemptions, and they applied to every part of Ireland, not only to Mayo and Donegal, but to the rich counties round Dublin and Belfast. He did not believe that during the period between 1817 and 1853 there was real ground to complain of financial treatment on the part of Great Britain. Perhaps the most serious grievance was the suppression of the right to cultivate tobacco in Ireland. Their turf soil was particularly well suited for the commoner kinds of tobacco. In the early part of the century a large amount of tobacco was cultivated in Ireland, and habitually used by the poorer classes. It was put down by Act of Parliament, in 1831, under the First Liberal Ministry that had been in power for a generation. The great period of augmentation of taxation began with the imposition of the Income Tax in 1853, when Mr. Gladstone reversed the policy of Sir Robert Peel, who had exempted Ireland from this tax. Not only was the augmentation of taxation at that period enormous, but he believed it was most unjustifiable. As was commonly the case, the blame did not rest entirely on one side, but by far the larger part of it was due to the policy of Mr. Gladstone. ["Hear, hear!"] But even then, as on all previous occasions, Ireland was looked upon as a distinct taxable unit. Mr. Gladstone argued that Ireland as a whole ought to pay more taxation than she did, and he also argued that Ireland was making a good bargain by the arrangement. He repealed certain consolidated duties which had 40 years to run, and he argued that, as the Income Tax, though a much heavier charge, would only last a few years, Ireland as a whole would gain. The result was that a capital debt of four millions was wiped out, but Ireland had since paid more than 24 millions of Income Tax. The Irish Members naturally opposed the Measure, and General Dunne made the question specially his own. Perhaps a few old Members of the House might still remember General Dunne. That Gentleman happened to be a very intimate friend of his father, and was, therefore, associated much with his early days, and he could well remember the indignation with which he used to talk of the extreme wrong that was then done to Ireland by Mr. Gladstone. An Irishman of Irishmen, belonging to one of the oldest Irish families, and a man of singularly independent character, he was at one time a moderate Whig and at another a moderate Tory, but he used to congratulate himself that, though he had sat on both sides of the House, he had never sat on the same side as Mr. Gladstone. [*Laughter.*] General Dunne struggled for a long time to obtain a Committee to inquire into the question of Irish taxation. Mr. Gladstone opposed it, but after ten years General Dunne succeeded in getting it. This Committee clearly recognised that there was a question between Great Britain and Ireland; it was appointed to consider the taxation of Ireland as a whole, how far it was in accordance with the Treaty of Union, and just in reference to the resources of the country. He did not know whether it was necessary to come further down, because in their own time there were abundant examples of the same kind. In 1888, 1890, and 1891 the separate unity was acknowledged, when grants were made in relief of local taxation and for the establishment of free education. In 1890 the present First Lord of the Admiralty, then Chancellor of the Exchequer acknowledged it when he appointed a Committee to inquire into the present financial relations between England, Scotland, and Ireland, and only last year they had the Rating Bill, when Ireland was not allowed to have half her local taxation remitted, as in England, for five years, but was put off with £700,000 less. [*Cheers.*] Some people seemed to consider Ireland as a kind of intermittent and fluctuating personality—something like Mr. Hyde and Dr. Jekyll—an integral portion when it was a question of taxation, and therefore entitled to no exemptions; a separate entity when it was a question of rating and therefore entitled to no relief. [*Cheers.*] He thought he had said sufficient to show Ireland had a distinct claim to separate treatment, and it appeared to him an extraordinary thing to argue that this was inconsistent with the Union. There was hardly any single subject of legislation in which Ireland was not legislated for separately. They had separate legislation about Church Establishments, about land, police, local government, education, and even, in some respects, about marriage. ["Hear, hear!"] All that had gone on for 97 years after the Union, and therefore it was preposterous to say that, in asking that Ireland should be legislated for separately in financial matters, they were acting in a manner inconsistent with the Union. [*Cheers.*] The statesmen responsible for the Union were careful to provide that in all future legislation in finance, Ireland might have the benefit of certain exemptions and abatements, but they did believe there would come a time when her circumstances would be such that no abatements would be required. They believed the wealth of Ireland was about to rise to the English level, and that the taxes might then become identical. Lord Castlereagh expressed this belief in a passage which has a great and melancholy interest:—

> "It must be evident," he said, "to every man that, if our manufactures keep pace in advancement for the next 20 years with the progress they have made in the last 20 years, they may, at the expiration of it, be fully able to cope with the British, and that the two kingdoms may be safely left, like any two counties of the same kingdom, to a free competition."

They all knew how unfortunately that prediction had been falsified, and how different was the level of wealth between the two countries. There were a number of causes of this difference. First of all there was Free Trade. England under Free Trade had advanced in prosperity in a manner beyond all example, but in Ireland the effects of Free Trade were totally different. Ireland was almost exclusively an agricultural country, and the effect of Free Trade had been first of all to depreciate the articles which she produced and then to deprive her of the monopoly which she previously had for her goods. Hon. Members talked about the depopulation of Ireland having resulted from over-taxation. He did not believe that any human being had left Ireland because his tea, tobacco, or whisky were too dear. It was not over-taxation which had depopulated Ireland, or the Land Laws, but, after the great pressure of the famine was over, what really depopulated Ireland was Free Trade, which turned it from a country of arable land into one of pasture land. He quite admitted that in some indirect ways Ireland had gained by Free Trade. He did not believe that Ireland, on the whole, had retrograded in material prosperity. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not also quite take the same view as hon. Gentlemen opposite about depopulation. He thought it was far better that Ireland should have four-and-a-half millions of prosperous people than eight millions of extremely poor people. Emigration in Ireland was not, he believed, of late years due to misery. If he might use an expression which looked like a bull, it was partly due to the home feeling which drew people from their homes to the country where many of their own people had gone. ["Hear, hear!"] It was also partly due to the higher industrial standard of ambition which led them to go to the country where they could make most of their industry and capital. Emigration does not always show the poverty of the people. It often means that large numbers had been able to save enough to go to the country where capital and industry would produce the highest return. ["Hear, hear!"] But when all this is admitted it is very doubtful whether any advantages that had come from Free Trade to Ireland had been at all equal to the great and terrible evil Free Trade had done to that country by striking down her agricultural monopoly and depreciating her principal produce. Even if it were true that Ireland had advanced under Free Trade, it was absolutely certain that she had not advanced in a corresponding rate with England. It must be remembered that in carrying out the Free Trade policy, a number of duties were abolished in England which Ireland had never paid, and in this way the proportionate taxation of the two countries was altered to the detriment of the poorer one. Then came the immense augmentation of taxation between 1853 and 1860, as to the injustice of which he observed there had not been a single dissentient voice. It fell upon Ireland at a time when she was barely recovering from the worst famine in her history; when the landed gentry were utterly crushed by a ruinous Poor Law, and at a time of great economical change which affected one of the principal sources of her revenue. Nearly 58 per cent., or 2½ millions, was added to the taxation of Ireland, and that impoverished and broken country was compelled for a time to pay not less than one-eighth part of the taxation of the kingdom. [*Cheers.*] When the glamour of rhetoric had passed away, when the fascination of a great personality was no longer felt, and the results of Mr. Gladstone's financial policy were reviewed in the cold clear light of history, it would not be forgotten that he was responsible for one of the grossest acts of fiscal oppression that Ireland in her long, disastrous history had ever undergone. ["Hear, hear!"] Then came the Disendowment of the Irish Church. That Measure was brought forward as a popular Measure, for which the people of Ireland should be extremely grateful, but what were its financial results? Two important grants, paid from the Consolidated Fund, the Regium Donum and the Maynooth Grants, came to an end, and they were compensated by large lump sums from the Church Fund, while the remainder of this purely Irish fund had been continually employed for charges that would otherwise fall upon the Imperial Exchequer. Then came the great Temperance movement. He did not suppose that anyone would object to the taxation of whisky because of its moral and social effects, but this did not affect its financial aspect. If you had a low tax on coal, and a tax of from three to six times as heavy upon turf, could anyone doubt how it would work? Then came the long period of agricultural depression. It did not, it is true, fall with such intensity upon a pasture country as on a corn-growing country. The contrast between many counties in England where farms were thrown upon the hands of landlords, and farmers could not be induced to take them, and the immense sums paid for tenant right in Ireland, established this fact. But on the other hand the agricultural depression was spread over a larger area in Ireland, for agriculture in Ireland occupied a much larger space in the resources of the country. He supposed that during the whole period of agricultural depression in England, although the agricultural classes suffered most severely, the country as a whole steadily and even rapidly advanced in wealth owing to the great prominence of its manufactures. In Ireland there had been no such advance, or if there had been an advance it was at a much slower rate. The financial history of England during the last half-century had been a history of greatly increased taxation, accompanied by a far greater proportionate increase of wealth, with a rapidly increasing population. The financial history of Ireland showed a corresponding incraese of taxation, with a far less progressive revenue, and a steadily declining population. While the population of England had trebled in the interval, the population of Ireland, so far as he could ascertain, was now exactly the same as it was at the time of the Union. In the period from 1819 to 1890 it would be found that in England the taxation per head of population, in spite of the enormous aggregate increase, had sunk from £3 14s. 8d. to £2 11s., while the taxation in Ireland per head had more than doubled, having risen from 15s. 5d. to £1 13s. 3d. And while the taxable capacity of Ireland was not more than one-twentieth of the Empire, her taxation was about an eleventh. Look at the matter from another point of view. Practically speaking the poor in Ireland, as in England, paid duty only upon three things—tea, tobacco, and strong drink. Ireland consumed in proportion to her means as much tea and tobacco as England, but in the consumption of strong drink Ireland was taxed at a rate enormously greater than England, for whisky was, according to alcoholic strength, taxed at six times the rate of beer. The tax upon whisky was estimated at two-thirds or three-fourths of its price, and the tax upon beer was only a sixth of its price. As the result of all this there was a clear *prima facie* case for Ireland's claim. It was tolerably evident that the two countries had advanced in a very different degrees of prosperity if indeed one could be said to have advanced at all, and it was extremely difficult to maintain fairness in taxation between two countries so unequal in their progress. What was the remedy for all this? They were often asked, "What tax do you wish to abolish, what policy would you propose as an alternative?" As they had been frequently challenged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others on the subject he might be allowed to say a few words upon this, and in the remedy he proposed he wished to speak with perfect candour, and not, he was afraid, altogether to the satisfaction of hon. Members opposite. In the first place, he did not believe in the possibility of any large extension of a system of abatements and exemptions. The Union must be kept, like many other treaties, in spirit but not in letter. It was easy to give exemptions when our fiscal system included numerous duties on a multiplicity of articles. It was much more difficult when all indirect taxation was concentrated on a very few articles. There were still a few exemptions from taxation in favour of Ireland. Some four millions were raised in Great Britain by taxes which did not apply to Ireland. He did not believe that these could be largely extended, and it would be absolutely intolerable to have a system of custom-houses between England and Ireland. [*Cries of* "No, no!" from Irish Members.]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The Channel Islands.

*Mr. LECKY thought that a very large number of hon. Members opposite would agree with him. Neither did he think that any remedy could be found in the abolition or the reduction of the duty on whisky. The hon. Member who had just spoken did not advocate that, but he had not always been of the same opinion. On this subject he was asked the question before the Commission: "What would be the effect of a reduction of the whisky duty?" and his answer was:—

> "I think the reduction of the tax would develop the well-being of the people, and if that were done they would not resort any more to coarse stimulants or vice of any kind."

He doubted whether any other hon. Member would share the hon. Gentleman's belief in the saving grace of cheap whisky. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LOUGH, interrupting, reminded the hon. Member that in Ireland, when whisky was cheapest, the greatest decrease in consumption took place in the four years between 1838 and 1843, during Father Mathew's time.

*Mr. LECKY said there was no Father Mathew now in Ireland, and he could not believe that if whisky were cheaper its consumption would diminish, or that the people would be either better or richer. It was quite impossible to find a remedy in this direction, nor could it be found in abatements and exemptions, but it might be found in an equivalent grant from the Imperial Exchequer. This might be done by making the cost of maintenance of lunatic asylums or of other institutions a charge upon the Consolidated Fund. He would also advocate increased expenditure on reproductive works. The fact that the taxable capacity of Ireland was greatly disproportionate to her taxation was a warning that something was wrong in the financial relations of the two countries, but he did not believe that it was possible to keep down expenditure in Ireland to any fixed relation to her wealth. It was impossible to provide how much an Irishman should spend in whisky or tobacco. The financial conditions had totally changed from what they were at the beginning of the century. Many new subjects of expenditure had arisen. Primary education was not then paid for by the State, the constabulary did not exist, and a new and enormous expenditure was required to carry out the beautiful Land Laws. [*Laughter.*] When the accounts of the two countries were made up, it would be found that this last item told much against Ireland. He had himself a strong belief in reproductive works. There were a large number of persons in England who denounced what Lord Farrer called doles to Ireland. He was not in general in favour of the aggrandisement of Governments, and wished they would tax, meddle, assist, and control less than they did. But what the extreme disciples of Mr. Cobden never clearly understood was that the amount of Government assistance in different countries must vary enormously according to circumstances. A country like England, rich in manufactures, with vast accumulations of capital, with a wealthy middle class and landlord class, with an intense industrial spirit pervading every class of the community, could do a number of things without Government assistance that could never be done in a country like Ireland, where there were no large fortunes, no thriving manufactures, a small middle class, and few who could afford to make investments that did not produce immediate return. Take light railways, for instance, which, perhaps, would never bring profit to shareholders—they could never be made in Ireland without the assistance of the Government. By far the most successful Chief Secretaryship of our time had been that of the right hon. Gentleman now the Leader of the House—[" hear, hear ! "]—and this was largely because he had pursued the policy of the Congested District Board as opposed to the *laissez-faire* system of Mr. Cobden. You cannot govern a country like Ireland on the *laissez-faire* system. He hoped the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Montrose and Bodmin would not think him offensive if he ventured to say that no class of persons were less fitted to understand Ireland or to govern Ireland than the thoroughgoing disciples of Mr. Cobden. [" Hear, hear ! "] They were rather peculiarly apt to develope into the worst type of fanatic—the doctrinaire fanatic. The whole trend and tendency of recent policy in Ireland had been to make Government initiative and assistance more necessary. What has been one result of the Land Laws? To ruin a great portion of the landlords, and to take from the rest all obligation, or inducement to spend money on local objects. Is it probable the men who have been reduced by Statute to the position of poverty and precarious rent charges on the estates that were once their own, will expend any savings they may make either upon those estates or upon the development of local enterprises? But this is not all. If they wanted the capital of one country to go into another, the first thing they had got to do was to teach the sanctity of contract and the obligation of debts. What has become of contract in Ireland? 56 millions have been expended under the Incumbered Estates Act in purchasing the complete and absolute ownership of Irish estates—every stone of the buildings as well as every acre of the land. The sales were effected under Parliamentary authority. The properties were held under a Parliamentary sanction, the most sacred known to English law. What has become of this absolute, undivided property so solemnly guaranteed, and on the strength of which such vast obligations have been incurred? Leases representing the clearest legal contracts voluntarily entered into, have been torn to pieces by the legislation of 1887. Even the judicial rents guaranteed for 15 years have been tampered with. Only last Session the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) told us with exultation that "it was all up with contract in Ireland." All this might be very beautiful, but it was not calculated to induce English investments to come to Ireland. Confiscation had many merits, but it had not that of attracting capital to a country. They were endeavouring to convert Ireland into a country of peasant proprietors. He hoped they would succeed, because he believed that, though it would not bring about a millennium in Ireland, it was the only way in which they could extricate the country from the confusion into which repeated confiscations and breaches of contract had brought it. But if they succeeded, two things would certainly follow, unless all the lessons which they could derive from the peasant proprietary of the Continent were untrue. One was that unless Government made the public works, nobody else would, for it was extremely unlikely that the peasant proprietors would make them. The other was, that if they did not wish the peasant proprietary to be the most ghastly of failures, they must produce in Ireland a higher level of agricultural industry and agricultural skill than at present existed. That could only be done by extending to Ireland some system of agricultural education like that which prevailed in Denmark and other countries of Europe. This, he believed, was the direction which, sooner or later, their policy would inevitably take, and he believed it was by such Measures that any inequality that now existed in their taxation could be best remedied. They were going to have another Commission to inquire into this question of Irish taxation. He did not suppose they looked forward to it with much delight; but there was not much use in opposing it, because sooner or later it would come to pass. But he thought there were two or three things with reference to this Commission which ought to be mentioned. One thing, which he believed the First Lord of the Treasury had already put forward, was that it was not to be a new but a supplementary trial, dealing with questions which had not yet been fully investigated. The conclusions of the last Commission would remain, and among them the cardinal fact of the disproportion between the wealth of Ireland and its taxation. He would also urge that there ought to be a judicial inquiry into the doctrine of what constituted Imperial taxation. Hon. Gentlemen were perfectly aware of the immense mass of legal opinion there was in support of the view that Imperial expenditure simply meant expenditure on the authority of the Imperial Parliament whenever it was spent, as local expenditure meant expenditure under local authorities. That view might be right or wrong; but, at all events, it was held by many high authorities. It was a question which ought to be judicially decided, and it was for that reason he had welcomed the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that Judges were to sit on the Commission. Then there was the question of the set-off. He thought that the new Commission ought to inquire into the place in which the money raised by taxation in each country was actually expended, as well as into the nature of Irish expenditure—whether it was really for the benefit of the country, or whether it was, as many of them believed, exceedingly improvident and exceedingly wasteful. ["Hear, hear!"] Then, again, there was the question of Ireland's contribution to Imperial purposes. It was constantly said that Ireland, according to the showing of the Commission, had one-twentieth of the taxable capacity of Great Britain, while according to the Treasury Returns she only paid one-thirtieth of the revenue. But it was not true that the Commission said that Ireland's taxable capacity was one-twentieth. It only said that it had not been put by a competent authority at a higher point. Lord Farrer only the other day said he thought it was much less, while Sir Robert Giffen was of opinion that, for the purposes of taxation, it ought not to be put beyond one-twenty-fifth. It was quite evident, on the other hand, that the figure of one-thirtieth as Ireland's contribution to the Imperial revenue was very fallacious. A number of items which were clearly Imperial were put down to the local account. There was the collection of the Imperial revenue in Ireland, and the expenses of the Viceroyalty, and there was also the great item of the Constabulary—an immense military force of some 12,000 men, supported by taxation to the extent of about a million and a half, and discharging, among other things, important revenue duties. A large portion of this ought to be transferred from the Irish side of the account to the Imperial side. In his opinion there was a real grievance, although he thought it had been greatly exaggerated, and although he did not share in the violent denunciations which had been made about the robbery of Ireland by England. He believed that most of the excessive taxation had been spent in Ireland either for Imperial or for Irish purposes; but he thought that, with the constant and steady decline in the relative, not absolute, prosperity of Ireland, the time had come when the account should be very carefully balanced again, and the best way in which the matter could be dealt with was by so increasing reproductive expenditure in Ireland that they might gradually raise the taxable capacity of the poorer country to the level of the richer one. [*Cheers.*]

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

MR. J. MORLEY (Montrose Burghs), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: I have the honour of following one of the most eminent Members of this House—a man distinguished in more than one way, and a Member of this House whom we are always glad to hear whenever he cares to address it. My hon. Friend has this afternoon administered a chastening monition to the Member for Bodmin and myself, and he has been good enough to lay down for the guidance of the Member for Bodmin and me the true principles of Irish government, and he says it ought never to be in the hands of doctrinaires. My hon. Friend, he and his class, have had the government of Ireland in their hands for ages—[*Irish cheers*]—and I wonder, if the doctrinaires had been in command all the time, whether they could have produced a more deplorable result than that which we now see. A considerable portion of the remarks of my hon. Friend were directed, not at all to the Motion before the House, but to extraneous topics. It matters very little to the right hon. Member for Bodmin or myself what may be said of us, but the hon. Member for Dublin University used some very, as I should have thought, excessive language about Mr. Gladstone. ["Hear, hear!"] He said that when the cool light of history is shed upon the career of that attractive and commanding personality it will be found that he has been the worst fiscal oppressor from whom Ireland has ever suffered. Aye, but Ireland has suffered from worse than fiscal oppressors. [*Cheers.*] The tax-gatherer has not been the worst oppressor of Ireland. The worst oppressor of Ireland has been the class for which my hon. Friend is the spokesman to-day. [*Cheers.*] But whatever Mr. Gladstone's misdemeanours may have been from the point of view of taxation, I submit that he has amply and a thousandfold redeemed any charges which may be brought on that account, by the fact that he has, at all events, prevented a perpetuity of that oppression of which my hon. Friend has to-day made himself once more the champion and the advocate. [*Cheers.*] My hon. Friend was not very discreet. He attacked Mr. Gladstone very bitterly for his land legislation; and what my hon. Friend calls "the cool light of history" is really the warm resentment of the Irish landlord. [*Cheers and laughter.*] But my hon. Friend bestowed warm eulogies—from which I do not for one moment wish to detract—on the present First Lord of the Treasury; and then he went on to talk about the cancelling of contracts under seal by the admission of the leaseholders to the benefits of this land legislation. Why, Sir, this canonised First Lord of the Treasury —[*laughter*]—is himself the Minister who passed the Measure which admitted the leaseholders. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LECKY: I expressly stated that it was under the Act of 1887.

MR. J. MORLEY: It is all very well to make express statements in asides—[*cheers*]—but the hon. Member has no right, when he is passing a sweeping condemnation on an illustrious contemporary —for such, at least, he must admit Mr. Gladstone to be—to make these reservations. I shall have a word to say by-and-bye upon the historic point which the hon. Member has raised; and I think that I shall be able to show to him that the animus which has induced him to lay the whole burden of the fiscal operations from 1852 to 1860 on Mr. Gladstone has misled him from the path from which I know in reference to more distant times he never swerves—the path of historic coolness and impartiality. I must return from the interesting speech of the hon. Member for Dublin University to the Motion which is before the House. The Motion moved by the hon. and learned Member for Longford affirms that it has been established by a Royal Commission that an undue burden has been laid upon Ireland; and that being so, that the Government is bound to provide remedial legislation. I do not understand, after listening to the weighty and powerful speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Government, as at present advised, traverse the proposition that an undue burden is laid upon Ireland. Because, I suppose, from the action of the Government in proposing the constitution of a new Commission, that they admit that so far a *primâ facie* case has been established; but they say—and I respectfully dissent from the view—that that *primâ facie* case stands in need of further corroboration, confirmation, and rectification. Then there is an Amendment to the Motion moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Spen Valley. He made a very potent and impressive speech; but there were some points in that speech which made me understand how it is that Englishmen are so well loved—how it is that they make themselves so attractive to Welshmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen. [*Laughter and cheers.*] My hon. Friend's Amendment is that, if there is an undue burden on Irishmen in Ireland, the same injustice of burden lies upon corresponding classes in Great Britain. That is the question which we are now discussing. A great deal has been said in the course of this discussion upon the Royal Commission. The implication has run through the Debate—and the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who made such an impressive and brilliant speech last night, seemed rather to share the idea—that the Commission was a packed Commission. ["Hear, hear!"] If that Commission was a Party Commission the fault does not lie with Mr. Gladstone, myself, or the Government. It is no fault of ours. I did my very best to secure the services on the Commission of two gentlemen—the right hon. Member for North Leeds, and the right hon. Gentleman who has since climbed the higher step of fame as Vice President of the Council. Both of those Gentlemen were Treasury experts, and I hoped to secure their services; but for good reasons or bad they were denied to us. Therefore, it was not my fault that those Gentlemen on the Bench opposite who know most about the Treasury did not take part in the Commission. They were invited. But there has been an assumption that those Gentlemen whom we were able to secure—Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, and Sir E. Hamilton—were so biassed by their political prepossessions that they would not judge, honestly and on their merits, any economic or scientific question which might be submitted to them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer talked about the Commission being established from the Home Rule point of view, and said that the Commission which he now proposes would be established from a Unionist point of view. I cannot understand what language of this sort means. [*Cheers.*] It is quite true that Gentlemen may have a prepossession for Home Rule, or for the maintenance of the Legislative Union as it now exists. But surely that is no reason why the men with these political prepossessions should not judge perfectly fairly and scientifically any scientific or economic issue submitted to them. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): That was not my argument.

MR. J. MORLEY: But the right hon. Gentleman used several times the expressions "Home Rule point of view" and "Unionist point of view." But these questions which our Commission was appointed to examine, and which your Commission is in other details to examine, have nothing whatever to do with the question whether a new system of government in Ireland, or the maintenance of the Legislative Union as it now subsists is preferable. They have nothing to do with the point of view from which scientific experts on scientific questions will devote themselves to the evidence brought before them. ["Hear, hear!"] But I must say this. Have you ever asked yourselves how it comes that gentlemen of enormous, unsurpassed administrative experience, like Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, and Sir E. Hamilton, have these Home Rule prepossessions? [*Cheers.*] They were not politicians. They had no political reason to take the Home Rule rather than the Unionist point of view. I will tell you why it is, and it is a most significant circumstance. As far as they did pledge themselves to the principle of a system of self-government for Ireland, they did so because their administrative experience had taught them the demoralising effect of the present system on Irish administration—a system which apparently the hon. Member for Dublin University wishes indefinitely to prolong.

[*Cheers.*] They found it from experience to be demoralising to the Irish Government, and they found it—and I venture to say that everyone will admit that that had much to do with their prepossessions for Home Rule—they found it unjust to the British taxpayer. Lord Farrer makes abundantly evident, in his letters to *The Times*, the fact that what he regards as of greatest importance is this—that the present policy involves a constant increase of the demands upon the British taxpayer, or a gradual decrease of "Imperial contribution," as it has been called. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the Report of the late Mr. Childers, and I will venture to say that that Report strikes me as one of the most important —one of the capital documents in the history of the relations between Great Britain and Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] Whatever may be the end of this particular controversy, and of the larger controversy as to the best system of government in Ireland, Mr. Childers's Report will remain, for its grasp of the subject, and for the excellent scheme on which it has been conceived, a capital document. ["Hear, hear!"] The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that Mr. Childers suggested a duty upon meats, dairy products, etc. If the right hon. Gentleman will refer to the Report he will find that Mr. Childers mentions this among three possible courses, but instead of suggesting or recommending it, he repudiated it, and threw it over as impracticable. I think it is only right to say that much of a man who unhappily is not here to speak for himself. Let us come to another point upon which I shall be interested to hear the views of the First Lord of the Admiralty. I heard it stated half-a-dozen times in the course of this Debate that the Royal Commission was appointed by me to settle Home Rule points, and that it was directed to approach the inquiry from the Home Rule point of view. It is important that this subject should be dealt with accurately and closely here, because there has been much vague talk and evasion in reference to it in the course of the Debate. It must be remembered that the beginning of this Commission is to be found in the time when the First Lord of the Admiralty was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the late Unionist Government. My right hon. Friend was asked whether he was prepared to grant an Inquiry into the financial relations between the two countries. I would ask my hon. Friend the Member for the Spen Valley Division, who thinks taxation goes by individuals and not by areas, to take a note of the answer; and perhaps my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin will take a note of it too.

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I repudiate it. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. J. MORLEY: It is not for me to measure my right hon. Friend's repudiations of the actions of his colleagues. But my right hon. Friend opposite said, in reply to that question:—

> "I do not want to exclude Scotland, and I think hon. Members from both countries will see that we are anxious to meet them. We shall be glad to throw as much light as possible on the financial relations of the two countries. Hon. Members will see at once that it must be a full and proper inquiry";

and my right hon. Friend winds up by saying:—

> "If the inquiry should show that injustice had been done to any part of the United Kingdom steps will be taken to afford redress."

[*Nationalist cheers.*] I will not read the proposed terms of reference to the Commission then promised, but the last paragraph was to the effect:—

> "How far the financial relations are equitable, having regard to the resources and population of England, Scotland and Ireland respectively."

[*Nationalist cheers.*] I think when my right hon. Friend gets up to reply he will not charge us with having framed the terms of reference to the late Royal Commission with a special regard for the Home Rule point of view. ["Hear, hear!"] The Royal Commission, so far as the most substantial portion of their inquiries goes, have done exactly what my right hon. Friend desired his Commission to have done. It is quite true that the Report of the Royal Commission contains, as was to be expected, many divergent recommendations and suggestions; but there is abundant evidence in these very divergencies—first, that the subject is one of very great difficulty and complexity; and, secondly, that the Commissioners felt themselves at liberty to use their own minds, apart from the terms of reference. There was, however, one proposition on which they were all agreed excepting the hon. Gentleman the Member for Greenock, and it is the only proposition which concerns the Motion before the House. I mean the proposition that there is an undue burden of taxation placed upon Ireland. [*Cheers.*] Sir Edward Barbour, who issued a Minority Report, says:—

> "It seems to me that Ireland is so greatly overtaxed in proportion to her resources that if we could ignore all considerations except those of revenue and taxable capacity it would be necessary, under the Act of Union, to apply a remedy of some kind."

I say therefore that the important result of this Commission, in my judgment, is that we have got an almost unanimous consensus of opinion which places beyond all dispute that the taxable capacity of Ireland in relation to Great Britain is 1-20th, while she pays 1-11th or 1-12th. [*Cheers.*] But we should not be very much surprised that this was the outcome of the Commission, because all of us who were here during the Home Rule Debates will recollect that my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty said that he considered that in relation to its wealth and its taxable capacity Ireland's share was 1-18th, 1-19th, or 1-20th; and during the same discussions the Secretary for the Colonies said that 1-18th was the proportion of Irish resources to those of Great Britain. [*Cheers.*] We therefore find that, notwithstanding the alleged sinister Home Rule bias, the Commission only arrived at the same conclusion as the First Lord of the Admiralty. It was said last night by the hon. Member for Greenock that the doctrine of separate treatment had been dead and buried during the century. The hon. Member for Dublin University has to-day quoted figures which show that the doctrine of separate entity was, on the contrary, recognised on a large scale up to 1853—and has been up to to-day for that matter—by respective Governments of both parties. ["Hear, hear!"] Twenty millions a year were levied in Great Britain by taxes not imposed in Ireland from 1817 to 1821; and that from 1845 to 1863 14½ millions were imposed annually in taxes in England that were not imposed in Ireland. [*Cheers.*] It is quite true that there were large remissions of taxation which was not imposed in Ireland, and that consequently the relief went to Great Britain alone; but it cannot be denied that during those years the fiscal separation of Ireland was largely recognised by this Parliament. [*Cheers.*] It is said that the excessive taxation of Ireland is due to whisky. This argument, which was used by the right hon. Member for Bodmin and the First Lord of the Treasury, I find it hard to discuss with gravity. ["Hear, hear!"] I greatly regretted to hear the First Lord of the Treasury say last night that he would find himself unable to take part in this discussion, for I should like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman a development of his view of free-will as applied to taxation. [*Laughter.*] I do not think he will find that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer agree with him in his truly astonishing doctrine that no tax—for this is what his doctrine of free-will comes to—can be unjust or oppressive, for a man can please himself whether or not he incurs the obligation to pay it. [*Laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That was not my argument.

MR. J. MORLEY: I submit that it was.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do not know that it matters much what it was. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh, yes."] But as it seems to interest the right hon. Gentleman, I will repeat it. I said that you could not possibly treat on exactly the same level in these matters money taken out of a man's pocket whether he liked it or not, and money which he could have kept in his pocket if he did not choose to incur the expenditure.

MR. J. MORLEY: Suppose I say that it is a monstrous thing that the income tax is 1s., and that it ought to be 6d.; then the right hon. Gentleman, on the principle he has just now restated to the House, would, if he were Chancellor, have a right to come to me and say:—"It is your own fault if you earn over £160 a year, and we will take your shilling out of your pocket. If you will be content with earning £160 a year, you will pay no tax, therefore you have no right to complain." I do not think any other interpretation or application of his proposition can be made but that. ["Hear, hear!"] I should like to refer to another curious doctrine which has been broached by the First Lord of the Treasury and by the hon. Member who moved the Amendment. That doctrine is that the principle of alcoholic taxation is that it is laid on in order to repress alcoholic consumption. I wonder if the late Chancellor of the Exchequer or the present Chancellor of the Exchequer would get up at that box and say he put a high duty on alcohol because he wanted to make the people drink less. This kind of talk is a bit of hypocrisy. ["Hear, hear!"] The high duty on alcohol is not in the least put on from the philanthropic side; it is put on at the highest point at which the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day convinces himself he will not get the worst of it by diminishing the consumption. ["Hear, hear!"] The Chancellor of the Exchequer asserted that I had said that alcohol was a necessary of life. As a matter of fact, I never thought it, and never said it. There are, however, many people who have said that alcohol is a necessary of life. There is a passage in Mr. Burke upon the virtues of gin and the solace gin affords to the labouring poor. In that respect I venture to dissociate myself from that illustrious man. [*Laughter.*] But let us turn away from this fascinating topic for a moment. If it comes to a question of the necessaries of life, nothing is a necessary of life except bread and water. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "I eliminate tea." Yes; but I submit that that is an arbitrary and capricious elimination. The right hon. Gentleman has also told us on some other occasion that he himself is indifferent as to tobacco. I think there are many hon. Gentlemen in this House who, from their observation of the lives of poor people in this country, from their knowledge of the great exposure, fatigue, and exhaustion to which men of this class are subjected, would agree that tobacco is, as a matter of fact, not much less a necessary of life than tea itself, if you have regard to the habits of the people. There are many scientific and medical authorities who have told us that, in their opinion, the consumption of tea is one of the explanations of the melancholy and deplorable fact that insanity is on the increase in Ireland. Without adopting that view, I do say that we have no right to assume that one particular article the people choose to consume has got superior virtues over any other. ["Hear, hear!"] I will venture to bring before the House, very shortly, what is the case in Ireland. In the First Report of the Congested Districts Board, published in 1893 and dealing with the previous year, there were 12 budgets of persons living within the area of the congested districts taken by different persons and relating to different portions of the area. Of these 12 budgets, taken by perfectly impartial and competent persons, there is only one which contains whisky at all. When you talk about our system of taxation being ideal and perfect, I would like to bring before the House one or two of the cases of these poor people—and they are poor, otherwise they would not be within the congested districts area. Here is a family whose little budget of revenue and expenditure is £30 a year. It is made up in this way. Agricultural, fishing, and home industries—rent, £2; cess, 5s. 8d.; tea £5 17s.; tobacco, £2 7s. 8d. As the House knows, the tobacco duty is 3s. 2d. per lb., or 85 per cent. of the selling price, and the duty on tea is 4d. per lb. Therefore this little humble household, consuming £5 17s. worth of tea, pays as duty on that £1 15s., and on their £2 7s. 8d. worth of tobacco they pay £2, so that with their little budget of £30 they contribute no less a sum than £3 15s. to the Imperial revenue. [*Cheers.*] Here is a second case:—Rent, £3; cess, 11s.; tea, £5 4s.; tobacco and snuff, £4 11s.; whisky, £2 8s. For rent they pay £3; between tea, tobacco, and snuff they consume £10; and on whisky they only consume £2 8s. I think figures of that kind will lead Gentlemen to rather reconsider the harsh language they are accustomed to apply to these unfortunate people in Ireland when they say that Ireland is always wallowing in the consumption of alcohol. [*Cheers.*] No doubt they are large consumers of tea and tobacco, but I submit that there is no preferential claim which can be set up on tea over tobacco. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley Division says—

> "Grant that the taxation on tea and on tobacco is excessive, is there not a similar grievance affecting the consumer of tobacco and tea in this island?"

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley): Of the same income and habits.

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not deny that these duties press very heavily on the poorest classes of this country. No doubt they have made vast strides within the past few years, and Mr. Gladstone's efforts to effect improvements in their condition in that direction may be set against the terrible title of being the worst fiscal oppressor Ireland ever knew, which has been applied to him by the hon. Member for the Dublin University. Mr. Gladstone has been at the head of this movement for reducing the burdens on the people, and great strides have been made in it. ["Hear, hear!"] There are two points to be considered in the Irish case. Here we are dealing, not with scattered groups of extremely poor people, but we are dealing with a community which, as the evidence before the Royal Commission most abundantly shows, is mainly and substantially composed not merely of poor, but of a class who correspond to something like almost the poorest parts of this kingdom. It is said that the same results might be shown in other parts of the kingdom. What I say is, that here is a case brought before us by the Report of this Commission; let us deal with this case, and then, by-and-bye, if some Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks he can apply the same principle of fiscal operations to the whole kingdom, we can deal with that matter when it is specifically before us in the same way that this is. ["Hear, hear!"] That does not in the least degree affect our duty if we can ameliorate the condition of a community which is admitted by everyone to have a title to be treated in a separate and distinct way. I do not regard the fraction of contribution, whatever it be, as a claim for damage, nor the findings of the Commission on this point as a claim for damages, but as a sort of summary of a social and economic situation. This is not the place for the examination of the particular tests by which the Commission arrived at their conclusions; but the House cannot deny that it is a most important and significant thing that this Commission, composed of men who approached the question from different points of view and taking different tests—somehow or another those tests, like the tests adopted by the Colonial Secretary and the First Lord of the Admiralty, all average about the figure of 1-20th. Anyone acquainted with the position of Ireland, anyone who travels through Ireland and then travels through England and Scotland, swarming with great towns, must see that to take that country at 1-12th or 1-11th is a monstrous inequality. I believe that I am forcing a door which is open. I do not believe that the First Lord of the Admiralty will tell the House that in his judgment 1-12th or 1-11th is a fair contribution from Ireland to the common revenue, but the right hon. Gentleman will agree that there is an undue burden on Ireland. I come to another point, and it is the fact that not only is the community a well defined one, but it is a community with certain covenanted rights for special consideration. [*Cheers.*] I was rather shocked to hear my hon. Friend the Member for the Spen Valley make so light of these treaty obligations, and I thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer passed lightly over them. The hon. and learned Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool (Mr. Bigham) said that he had never heard of such a thing before; it is called a treaty, he said, by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Was it not a treaty? Was not the Union a treaty? Has the hon. and learned Member never read the noble words of Pitt in making his Motion for the Union in 1799? This House has always been too apt and is at this moment too apt to forget what was the starting point. These are the words of Pitt:—

> "Is it not rather the free and voluntary association of two great countries, which join, for their common benefit, in one Empire, where each will retain its proportional weight and importance, under the security of equal laws, reciprocal affection, and inseparable interests, and which want nothing but that indissoluble connection to render both invincible?"

Then he wound up by a famous quotation from Virgil:—

> "Non ego, nec Teucris Italos parere jubebo,
> Nec nova regna peto; paribus se legibus ambæ
> Invictæ gentes æterna in fœdera mittant."

It was a treaty, it was a *fœdus*. Let us go from Pitt and look at the Irish newspapers of to-day. The Chief Secretary no doubt finds it to be part of his duty to read the Irish newspapers, not the most enviable part of his duties. At this moment every newspaper of every complexion in Ireland—Unionist, Parnellite, Nationalist—are all pressing every day upon the minds of their readers in discussing this question whether or not this House is to sanction, aid, and abet an infraction of the spirit and letter of the Act of Union, or whether it will deal with it as Mr. Pitt meant it to be dealt with—as, in effect, a treaty between two equal contracting parties. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he took his stand by the arrangement of 1817. What did Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, say on June 16 1815? He said:—

> "I do not fear that Parliament will ever declare the competency of Ireland to bear the entire weight of that taxation which the wealth and resources of England enable her to support without reference to those considerations upon which alone Ireland should be exempted from those burdens which are laid upon all other subjects of the United Kingdom. The power of that exemption is expressly reserved to Parliament by the Act of Union."

Lord Castlereagh, on the point of revision in the arrangements of the Union, said:

> "Ireland has by these means" (that is, the assurance of revision) "the utmost possible security that she cannot be taxed beyond the Measure of her comparative ability";

and he also said:—

> "The United Parliament will always be able to make abatements in Ireland, as the Parliament of Great Britain has always done in Scotland since the Union when, from local circumstances, the high duty cannot be levied without either rendering the revenue unproductive or pressing too hard upon the poorer classes."

Whatever else this Commission has done it has undoubtedly shown that your present system of taxation, if uncompensated, does press too hard on the poorer classes in Ireland. There is a very remarkable attitude taken up in regard to the Act of Union. Hon. Members from Ireland say you ought to have indiscriminate expenditure, but not taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day rode on the other horn. He said you ought to have indiscriminate taxation, but you ought not to have indiscriminate expenditure. The whole of the last portion of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer implied discriminating expenditure. But you have to make up your mind what your line is to be. My own impression is that the founders of the policy of the Union intended both indiscriminate taxation and indiscriminate expenditure. If Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh could see what has happened from indiscriminate taxation they would be horrified, because that indiscriminate taxation might lay just as heavy and just as unfair a burden on Ireland as any excess in the quota system which they contemplated the eventual removal of. They took every pains to avoid any excess falling upon Ireland. They provided for periodic revision in the quota; and if they had seen the possible injustice which would just as well arise under indiscriminate taxation as Lord Castlereagh at the time saw would arise under the quota, they would have provided for revision. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has entirely established the case for separate treatment of Ireland. If all excessive local expenditure in Ireland went back to the pockets of the individual people who pay what, by the hypothesis, we admit to be an excessive taxation, there would be something in the argument; but unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer can assure us that the present expenditure flows into the same pockets from which excessive taxation comes, I do not think there can be very much in the argument. The question, however, is whether there is any remedy that we can now propose. It is not our business to propose any remedy. If you agree that any unfair burden is imposed upon Irishmen who pay taxes in Ireland, if you agree in that, it will be your duty to find some remedy for that admitted wrong. The hon. Member for the University, who preceded me, laid great stress on the suggestion that the way to recoup Ireland for any excessive payment by that country was by reproductive works. I am sorry to say, from my own experience, that I do not believe any worse thing could be done. Of all kinds of aid of that kind given to Ireland I should put down 50 per cent. as waste—["hear, hear!"]—and you not only waste this enormous percentage of the money of the taxpayers, but you demoralise Ireland herself. ["Hear, hear!"] I, for my part, will do my best to resist any remedy that takes that particular form. I do not object to what was done by the First Lord of the Treasury when he was Irish Secretary; but I may say, without any want of charity, that the success of the experiment still remains to be proved, and I am afraid that even there you will find that your benevolent attempts have not been entirely successful, and that when the final count is struck you will discover a great deal of the money has been wasted. But there is another way of repaying to Ireland any excess of taxation which you may be driven to admit. I do not know whether it would be popular with hon. Members below the Gangway or not, but I consider it worthy of the consideration of the Government. You are pledged to bring in a Measure for county government in Ireland. That is part of the Unionist scheme of policy.—[An HON. MEMBER: "No."] I do not know who says "No," but if my statement is challenged all your pretence of a resolution to put Ireland on the same footing as England or Scotland is baseless. For years Royal Commissions and Committees have reported that the present conditions of local government in Ireland are intolerable, and Measures on the subject have figured in 40 Queen's Speeches at least. Supposing that at last hon. Gentlemen opposite screw up their courage and coerce their Unionist friends from Ireland into an admission that there ought to be a scheme of local, responsible, elective, representative government in Ireland, and supposing, if you establish these representative bodies, that you make up your mind that Ireland is entitled to have a million or a million and a half, why should you not hand over that sum to those local bodies and make them responsible for the expenditure of it? [*Ministerial laughter.*] I thought I was submitting what is certainly not a Home Rule policy. I was suggesting that when you set up local government in Ireland you should supply a fund with which to set the local bodies going, so that if they wasted it they would have to bear the burden of that waste. ["Hear, hear!"] I think the new Commission is a most needless and futile process. I do not know why it is appointed. I do not know what it is going to inquire into which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not find out for himself by a week's work in the Treasury. As to the proposal that there should be Judges on this Commission, I wonder what light Judges can throw upon the question of tax exemptions. We were charged with packing one of our Commissions, and the First Lord of the Treasury, criticising its composition, said that everyone upon it would have either a patriotic or a political bias. Well, I am very interested to hear what you think of the composition of the Commission of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nobody on it is to have a patriotic bias—that is to say, a Commissioner is not to be an Englishman or Scotchman or Irishman, or he would have a patriotic bias. Then he is not to have a political bias—that is to say, he is to be an important and capable man who, during all these years of discussion about Irish government, has somehow or other kept his mind a complete blank upon the subject. [*Laughter.*] If you are going to abolish patriotic bias and political bias you must have recourse to the King of Sweden. [*Laughter.*] I do not say that the Government might not have contended that some points and issues were left over by the late Commission; but then they would have done much better to remit this margin of unsettled questions, the question of set-off and so on, back to the old Commission. To constitute a new Commission on lines which I cannot comprehend and for purposes which you can satisfy without reference to any Commission at all, I can only look upon as an evasion, a dilatory plea. ["Hear, hear!"] The fact is you find the feeling in Ireland so strong that you want to let the gale blow over, but you cannot. You will be baffled. However, I am not altogether discontented with the result of this Debate. We have established, from the admissions of the Government, that Ireland ought to be treated for fiscal purposes as a separate entity and unity; secondly, we have got it established that competent and important men believe that the over-taxation of Ireland amounts to a very large annual sum; and, thirdly, we shall have brought home to the mind of the British taxpayer the fact that the alternative policy of reproductive works, of what is called generosity to Ireland, is a generosity which is to be practised at the expense of the taxpayer. ["Hear, hear!"] I apologise to the House for having detained it for so long, but I have thought it necessary to state the reasons which induce me to vote for this Resolution.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square), who was received with Ministerial cheers, said: The laws of courteous Debate require me to compress my observations into the very shortest time possible, in order that an hon. Member from Ireland may have an opportunity of replying. I will endeavour to bring out from the mass of statistical and controversial matters that have been raised the first-class issues which are really before us. The chief issue, stated in its broadest terms, is this: The majority of a Commission have reported that a sum varying from two-and-a-half millions to two-and-three-quarter millions is paid by Ireland in excess of what Ireland ought to pay, and those who refuse to look at this matter any further, and who consider that now we have got all the facts before us, have no option, it seems to me, but to accept the conclusions of the Commission. Is that the position of the Party opposite? Are they prepared to say that two-and-a-half millions ought to be transferred from Ireland and put upon British taxpayers? That is the clear issue which is before us. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down speaks of a million or a million and a half, but if you accept the finding of the Commission that Ireland is unduly taxed to the extent of two-and-a-half millions, whatever you might do in the way of a palliative the grievance would still remain; it would still be contended that Ireland had been unjustly treated, and we should not have advanced much further than we are at present. If Ireland has been unjustly treated every dictate of honour would require that Ireland's grievance should be met, and that would be the view of every Unionist. But we traverse the Motion which is now before us absolutely. We do not admit the case as put before us by the Royal Commission. We do not admit the undue burden which the right hon. Gentleman described as a burden "unless there be a set off in other directions." There is the point; that is the cardinal issue which has to be referred to the new Commission, viz., whether the sum spent on local purposes in Ireland ought to be treated as a set off or not. I know that hon. Members below the gangway opposite do not accept the doctrine that there is that set off; they ignore it. But how does the right hon. Gentleman opposite propose to deal with the question? By a new set off. [*Laughter.*] He proposes to meet the grievance of Ireland by an allocation of money which is to be spent in Ireland; but that is what we have been doing during the last ten years.

MR. J. MORLEY: My point was that the money should be spent by the Irish themselves, and not by Imperial departments.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: Well, I think the million for education in Ireland goes into the pockets of the people, although it is voted by the Imperial Parliament, just as much as it would if it were voted locally. I now turn to another point of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. I refer to what he calls the effect of these duties on tobacco and spirits. He had spoken of how hardly individuals are hit by these taxes, but he does not propose to remedy it at all. The money is to be placed at the disposal of the County Councils, but he does not state for what purposes—possibly for the relief of Ireland and Irish resources. If so, that would meet the views of the hon. Member for Dublin University. But he does not propose, and not a single Member who has spoken in the Debate has proposed, that this question should be met by the reduction of taxes, which are alleged to be the great burden.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): The right hon. Gentleman should not be misled as to what Irish opinion is. There are a large number of Irish Members who do demand a reduction of taxation, but who have not been allowed to speak in the Debate.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I do not know how that may be. I accept the statement of the hon. Member, but it has not found expression in the Commission, on which the majority were Irish representatives. [*Cheers.*] The feeling may be so in Ireland, but it has not yet been recommended by the Commission, on whose authority we are asked to transfer two and a-half millions from one body to another. But is it conceivable that if this Budget were acknowleged to be such that we ought to interfere with the fiscal policy of this country and reduce the remaining portion of taxation—that the poor inhabitants of Bethnal Green should continue to pay a duty on their tobacco, while the equally poor, but not poorer, inhabitants in Ireland should not continue to pay them? Whatever remedy may be adopted, I venture to consider that this is not the remedy which would commend itself to the House. I hold with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that no remedy can be adopted which interferes with the general fiscal policy of the country. Now I have said that the demand is that £2,500,000 should be transferred from Ireland to the shoulders of Great Britain, and that the present contribution by Ireland per head is £1 9s., while the contribution by Great Britain is £2 4s. Whether Ireland pays too much or not, at all events every Irish individual has to pay infinitely less than the individual in this country. A disparity in favour of the poorer country exists. If time allowed I should have liked to have followed, not in detail, but broad outline, the historical argument on which so much stress has been laid. It has been mentioned that in the first five years after the Act of 1817 England continued to pay at the rate of 20 millions in taxes which were not imposed on Ireland. If the historical argument, which is not acceptable to the right hon. Gentleman, is to hold good, of course a point like that would have to be heavily weighed. For my part I am bound to say that the historical argument does not greatly impress me. I do not think it would be fair to put on the great-grandson of an English labourer at the time of the Union an additional burden now to relieve the great-grandson of an Irish peasant who paid too much in the earlier part of the century. But we now come to the very important period between 1853 and 1860, in which the grievance arose through the increase of the spirit duty and the Income Tax. But let me point out that, while the right hon. Member for Montrose laid such great stress on the harsh taxation of the spirit, tea, and tobacco duties, and that while others have said that famine is stalking at the door of the Irish occupier because the duty on whisky was too high, if the Home Rule Bill had passed these taxes would have become a permanent pledge to the English Exchequer as a contribution to the Imperial revenue. Hon. Members opposite discovered this excess in this tax, not when the Home Rule Bill was under consideration, but now after a Commission has been appointed. [AN IRISH MEMBER: "They have the figures!"] The hon. Member has fallen into the trap which I was laying for him. [*Laughter.*] It is the Commission which has made the difference. But we are told that the Commission has arrived at no new facts, that the 1-20th was before the House when the Home Rule Bill was under discussion; the 1-10th to 1-12th was also. The set-off in local taxation, too, was before the House when the Home Rule Bill was under discussion. In the face of these facts, to which nothing has been added by the Commission as regards revenue or expenditure, the right hon. Gentleman and his Party are prepared to take up a totally different attitude from that which they took up on the Home Rule Bill. I have spoken of the period from 1853 to 1860. From that time the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth said the amount per head of Imperial taxation in Ireland rose until the proportions were very different from what they were before. But the hon. and learned Member, like almost every hon. Member in this Debate, has omitted the question of local taxation and expenditure for local purposes. Many hon. Members will remember the period between 1860 and 1890. It was a period of increase in local taxation by leaps and bounds. This country had to expend vast sums of money on account of the increasing needs of the people, and for purposes that were rendered necessary by the increase in civilisation, but which weighed most heavily on the British taxpayer. And while this increase in local taxation was going on in England, by which, taking Imperial and local taxation together, the Englishman and the Scotchman were heavily weighted—during that time money was being freely given from the Imperial Exchequer to Ireland for the same purposes for which Englishmen were being rated. [*Cheers.*] Without taking account of that, I say it is impossible to form an opinion as to the relative burden on the different parts of the kingdom. This matter must be looked at as a whole, and we must take the doctrine of set-off as it has been taken previously on various occasions. ["Hear, hear!"] I come now to the year

1890, when I, as a Member of the Government of that time, moved for a Commission to inquire into the financial relations between England and Ireland. When I used the phrase "fiscal entity"—not, as has been stated, "taxable entity"—in regard to Ireland, I was looking upon the question, not as a political question, but as a fiscal question. I looked upon it in this way, that Ireland must receive a certain amount of benefit when any considerable amount was granted to England from the Imperial Exchequer. Large grants in relief of local taxation were at that time made to England. Would it have been right to treat that as a common purpose? Yet we are now asked to look on any money spent in Ireland for local purposes as money spent for a common purpose and properly payable out of the Imperial Exchequer. [*Cheers.*] That is not a doctrine that can be applied to Ireland alone. ["Hear, hear!"] If it is true of Ireland, it is true of England. Because at the time we were giving large sums to England, I thought Ireland and Scotland ought to have corresponding benefits, and I thought we were all the more bound to see to that, because as Unionists we should regret that anything like fiscal injustice should have arisen during the fierce political struggles then going on. [*Cheers.*] On that occasion I caused to be drawn up—and I incurred great personal responsibility in doing so—those tables which have formed the foundation of the present controversy, which have been before the Commission, and which have been scarcely shaken by that Commission. My hon. and learned Friend complimented me on the accuracy of those tables. What was the result of those tables as drawn up? That Ireland, taking all expenditure and revenue together, was paying 3·6 towards Imperial expenditure. But that part of the tables is not accepted as authoritative, though the contribution to revenue has been accepted as fairly correct at 1-20th. My hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University wished to have even that question re-opened before the Royal Commission; but for my part I am prepared to stand by that figure. ["Hear, hear!"] While hon. Members opposite accepted that portion of these Returns, and while my hon. and learned Friend complimented the Treasury on their accuracy, he spent half an hour in showing that, in his opinion, our analysis of expenditure was incorrect, and ought not to be accepted. What is to come, then, before another Commission? Clearly those points which are not accepted by the Party opposite generally as conclusive. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Treasury can do in a week what we are asking a Royal Commission to do. The Treasury have done it, and it has been placed before Parliament, not only by ourselves, but by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. In the Returns provided for the Home Rule Bill there stood all these figures and, if they are accepted, Ireland is now paying less than she ought to Imperial expenditure. Therefore, if we are to accept the authority of Treasury figures, we should have no further Commission and no action taken on the finding of the previous Commission. ["Hear, hear!"] This set-off, which is now repudiated by the majority of the Commission, was allowed by Mr. Gladstone under the Home Rule Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] We are prepared to examine the Act of Union and the question of exceptions and abatements, and if it can be proved on examination that the set-off, which we hope the Commission will examine, and which the late Commission ought to have examined but did not, has not the effect which we believe it to have, it would, no doubt, be our duty to see whether such abatements and exceptions as were contemplated in the Act of Union can be made in the interest of Ireland, and, if so, we should not hesitate to come forward and ask the taxpayer to allow them. ["Hear, hear!"] But I would ask right hon. Gentlemen opposite, when did this question of exceptions and abatements present itself to the Party opposite? What question of exceptions and abatements was raised in the Budgets between 1853-63 or during the whole period that has followed since then? [*Cheers.*] Does it not shake, to a small extent, the confidence of hon. Gentlemen opposite in the finding of this Commission when they find that it must run counter to the deliberate action of all their leaders and the men who have guided their finances? That is a point I am entitled to submit to their judgment. ["Hear, hear!"] What was in Mr. Gladstone's mind in 1853? He looked on the question evidently from the point of view of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Greenock, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Spen Valley. I do not remember any recantation of that view. It was not recanted during the period of his Chancellorship of the Exchequer, or during the Debates on the Home Rule Bill. I do not hold the doctrine to the extent my right hon. Friend held it and acted on it; but I do submit that his authority should not be lightly disregarded by hon. Gentlemen opposite in the action they are now taking. ["Hear, hear!"] I should like to know what Mr. Gladstone's attitude would have been had he at this day to deal with the Motion before us. I hope I have shown some reason why a Commission should be adopted. We feel that that which the late Commission was instructed to examine has not been examined. We find that the principle which underlay the reference—namely, that money spent for local purposes, should be taken into consideration when calculating undue burdens—has been entirely set aside by the late Commission, and into that matter our Commission will look. They will be entitled, nay, more, it will be their duty, to examine this principle of set-off. I hope they will keep free from all theoretical questions and subsidiary matters and apply themselves to three points—first, ought there to be a set-off, and, if so, was that properly calculated in the Treasury returns; secondly, ought there or ought there not to be a contribution towards Imperial expenses from Ireland; and, thirdly, is there anything in the circumstances of to-day that would require the application and giving effect to that part of the Act of Union that requires that under certain circumstances abatements and exemptions are fair to the poorer country? ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR (Clackmannan and Kinross) desired to briefly state the reasons why he should give his vote in favour of the Motion, and he believed that the like reasons would not be without influence on the action of many of his colleagues in the Scottish representation. His main reason was that the Motion recognised and the Amendment negatived the claim to have nationality acknowledged as a basis for considering the equity of financial contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. That had for a long time been recognised by successive Governments, and public opinion in Scotland regarded it as important. Since 1888 it had been recognised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in apportioning local grants in the ratio of 80, 11, and 9. In 1890 a Select Committee was appointed to inquire and report in regard to the financial relations of the three countries, England, Scotland, and Ireland. That Committee met only once, for it was the end of the Session, but it recommended that a similar Committee should be reappointed in the subsequent Session, and the reappointment of that Committee Scotland had always greatly desired and strongly urged. He fully believed that the acceptance of his hon. Friend's Motion would eventually lead, and in no very long time, to an inquiry in regard to Scotland, and the result would be to bring about a material diminution of the taxation levied in that country. He was not speaking on the question at large, but he would add that the large expenditure in Ireland which had sometimes been called a set-off for its large contribution would have no equivalent in Scotland, where the expenditure was generally admitted to be very moderate.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) devoted his first few words to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the first point on which it was necessary to correct him was this. The right hon. Gentleman was under the impression that the Liberal Party, and to some extent the Irish Party, were estopped from complaining of the financial relations between Ireland and Great Britain by the fact that both the Liberal Leaders and the Irish Party were in favour of the Home Rule Bill, which left these financial relations as they are, and the right hon. Gentleman also made observations as to the attitude of Mr. Gladstone on the occasion. First in regard to Mr. Gladstone it should be noted that he had in the plainest terms declared his conviction that a case for Ireland had been made out. In the *Contemporary Review* for 1888 the following passage would be found in an article written by Mr. Gladstone:—

> "Ireland loudly and intensely complains that we have fleeced her, as Dr. Johnson predicted we should."

This was a statement from the most eminent financial Minister the Liberal Party ever had:—

> "I am compelled, after some inquiry into this very intricate subject, to say that, in respect to her share of the National Debt charged to her under the arrangement of the Act of Union, her complaint, in my opinion, is one the substance of which it will be found impossible to confute."

Here then was an instance of an act of reparation and withdrawal on the part of Mr. Gladstone in regard to the financial relations established between England and Ireland. But no doubt the astute and subtle mind of the right hon. Gentleman would be ready with the answer that this article was written in 1888, and in his Bill of 1892 Mr. Gladstone left the financial relations pretty much as they were. But the memory of the right hon. Gentleman was a little at fault with regard to that part of the Home Rule Bill. Irish Members—and especially Mr. Sexton, whose services in elucidating this question nobody could gainsay or exaggerate—["hear, hear!"]—were strongly discontented with the financial proposals of the Home Rule Bill, and it was in consequence of this discontent that two things happened. First, in the Home Rule Bill the financial relations were made provisional for some six or seven years, and in the second place a Royal Commission was promised; that Commission practically the House was now dealing with, though not the same in *personnel*. That Royal Commission was promised in order that the Irish claims might be considered, and to see if the financial relations were on a sound basis or not. He did not say this for the purpose of casting any reflection on an English Party, and so far as Ireland was concerned there was almost equal ground of complaint against one Party as against the other. One of the recollections every Irishman would carry from this Debate was, that next to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Longford and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, the ablest and most sympathetic speech made in support of the Irish claim came from a Conservative Member, and the attack on Ireland made with the crudest theory and most malignant temper came from an honourable Member who called himself a Radical. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore, as to the quarrel as between English Parties, Irishmen stood impartially aside. Their position was that of Irishmen fighting the case for Ireland, and it was a case he was glad to say they were all united upon. And what was that case? It would be ridiculous for him to attempt to go over the details, for these had been elaborated by a much abler man than himself. It was unnecessary for any Irish Member to refer to more than the leading principles of the controversy after the speech of the hon. Member for Longford, which marked an epoch in this struggle, and he hoped also in his hon. Friend's Parliamentary career. He would state the case in general terms. First, that the Act of Union is a solemn contract still in force; secondly, that an article of that contract was that Ireland should not lose financially by the loss of her separate Parliamentary existence; that she should increase in prosperity and wealth, and that the taxation on the other hand should not be increased, that if not decreased it should remain at the same level; thirdly, that so far from this contract having been kept and these promises realised, her population had halved and her taxation doubled; and, fourthly, that the claim of Ireland had been examined and confirmed by a tribunal appointed by Great Britain, and if not in the majority largely composed of eminent English financial experts. Then he rapidly ran through the answers made. The first was that those who made the Act of Union did not understand the meaning of what they were doing. Whatever the contract was, this was usually the plea of the party wishing to break it. The Act of Union was the work of some of the ablest statesmen of the day, their public words were on record, and their correspondence proved that they plainly enough understood the full meaning of the bargain they made. It was a little startling in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the First Lord of the Admiralty had joined in the statement, to find that little importance was attached in reference to the Act of Union to the historic aspect of the question. Now the Act of Union upon which Irishmen relied for their case was alluded to some years ago in a Queen's Speech, and in that Speech, departing from constitutional usage, and he believed even from constitutional doctrine, Her Majesty's then advisers referred to this Act of Union as a "fundamental law," and yet this very Act was now to be regarded as an absolutely insignificant document. Hon. Members on the other side had said surely the Act must now be considered as abandoned. Not so, the terms of the Act upon which Irish Members relied were re-enacted in 1816, were confirmed by speeches made in Parliament then, and as the hon. Member for the University of Dublin had pointed out, formed a portion of the very clauses of the very body of the Act of 1816. Then it was said the Act of Union could be neglected or could be modified. Yes, a contract could be modified, but only on condition that the contracting parties agreed to the modification; but a modification was indefensible when made by the richer, more powerful partner in his own favour against the will of his poorer partner. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite said, "Why didn't you think about that when you disestablished the Irish Church?" But the Irish Church was disestablished by mutual agreement. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"] Yes, by England passing it, and Ireland demanding it; and to say that a recognition of a contract with the agreement of the two parties, and to the advantage of the weaker party, was to be put on a par with a breach of a contract by the will of one party and against the consent and to the prejudice of the other, was one of the absurdest pieces of analogy which even the hon. and gallant Gentlemen had ever offered. The Act of Union was a bargain between the rich and powerful country with the weaker and the poor country—a bargain, be it remembered, that was forced upon Ireland. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the member for North Armagh said last night, that an ancestor of his sat in the Irish Parliament, and that he voted against the Act of Union. [*Cheers.*] He regarded it as a curious thing that nearly every hon. Gentleman opposite who had Irish blood in his veins was prouder of the fact that his ancestor voted against the Act of Union than of almost anything else in his family history. [*Laughter and cheers.*] He did not think that that temper was likely to be changed by the fact that the descendants of these men had found out the truth of the prophecies made at the time of the Union, that that legislation would be as destructive to the landlords of Ireland as it would be to the population of Ireland. [*Cheers.*] What were the circumstances under which the Act of Union was passed? Nobody denied that Ireland, before the Act of Union was passed, was a lightly-taxed country, and that England was a heavily-taxed country; and the great argument was, that if they united a rich and heavily-taxed country to a poor and lightly-taxed country, the result was bound to be that the poor country would be levelled up to the taxation of the richer country. It was to meet that argument that this section was placed in the Act of Union. [*Cheers.*] The liberties of Ireland were bought by this promise, and it was a monstrous thing for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Party, and his country generally, to say they are not bound by that contract, and the bargain by which the Irish people were induced to part with their independence. [*Cheers.*] There was no answer in honour or in conscience to the demand of Ireland that England should keep her word and her faith in regard to the Act of Union. [*Cheers.*] They had heard a great deal from the Member for the Spen Valley about the taxpayer of England being put in a different position to the taxpayer of Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer used the same argument, and so did the First Lord of the Admiralty, who instanced the case of a taxpayer of Bethnal Green. His difficulty in answering that argument was the *embarrass de richesses* of the replies that could be made. The inhabitant of Bethnal Green was master of his own political destinies. He could elect whom he pleased, and the man elected by him, with other Englishmen, formed the overwhelming majority of this Parliament, always able to control legislation in this Parliament in the interests of England. If he chose to give his sanction to legislation and taxation which weighed oppressively on him that was his affair. ["Hear, hear!"] That was not the position of the Irishman, who was powerless to control the legislation of this Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] Then there was the extraordinary contention of the Member for the Spen Valley and other speakers, that the same impost on the same article in Ireland and in England meant the same thing. That meant, if it meant anything, that to put the same tax on India and on England, because the tax fell on individuals and not on areas, would amount to the same thing. Let them test the argument. Put a tax on rice in England and it would not do very much harm; place a tax on rice in India and they would bring the country within the reach, if not absolutely within the fangs, of famine. [*Cheers.*] Then, again, Bethnal Green was one of the poorest districts of London, and the case of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley would be perfectly complete if all England consisted of Bethnal Greens. But all Ireland consisted of people on the same level of those in Bethnal Green. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"] Hon. Gentlemen contradicted that observation; perhaps they would allow him to confirm it by facts and figures. The average poor law valuation of the Congested Districts of Ireland was £1 0s. 3d. The valuation of Bethnal Green was about £3; so that so far as that portion of Ireland was concerned, its valuation was one-third of the valuation of the champion district, the grievance of which was put against the grievances of Ireland. [*Cheers.*] It might be said that he had only taken the Congested Districts. He would take the whole of Ireland. The average valuation of Ireland as a whole was £2 18s. 6d. The valuation of the poorest borough of London was about £3; and, therefore, he was entitled to say that all Ireland showed a valuation on the level of Bethnal Green. [*Cheers.*] He thought he had sufficiently dealt with the argument that Ireland should be taxed not by areas, but by individuals. The next argument was the contra account. He was rather astonished that anybody should have the courage to put forward that argument. One of the great items was the charge for Constabulary. Why did they require so many Constabulary? Would so many Constabulary be required if Ireland were self-governed? What was the Irish Constabulary? The hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin acknowledged frankly that it must be regarded as an Imperial body, which should be paid for out of the Imperial Exchequer. The Constabulary was a fine and robust body of men, but a well-drilled army of occupation, for the purpose of helping this Imperial Parliament to govern Ireland against the country's will. The argument of the Government was, that any money spent in Ireland was local Irish expenditure, and that any money spent in England, except that from the rates, was to be charged to the Imperial expenditure. The Queen had spent 12 days in Ireland, and Ireland had contributed her share to the expenses of Royalty during all Her Majesty's reign. Was that contribution to be charged as Imperial expenditure or as English expenditure? He maintained that the argument of the Irish representatives had been confirmed by the Commission. It was said that Irishmen were in the majority. As a matter of fact, the gentlemen who represented Nationalist opinion were a small minority of the Commission, and one of the gentlemen, who must be counted as an Irishman, Sir David Barbour, was the strongest opponent of the claims of Irishmen. He called it an English Commission, appointed by an English Government. Why was not the jury challenged before it gave its verdict? Not a single man ever objected to the composition of the jury until an adverse verdict had been given, and now the conduct of hon. Gentleman opposite was to play the part of the rich litigant that would drag a poor defendant from court to court, trusting, by his rich purse, to ultimately gain the victory. He knew that in the division they would be beaten, but that was not the end of their claim. [*Cheers.*] They made a just and equitable demand, and they made it practically in the name of a united Irish people. What was the answer of almost the most powerful Ministry this country had ever had or probably ever would have? It was that they were able to do justice to every demand of Ireland. The promise of their ancestors was that Ireland could always rest in security on the liberality, the justice, and the honour of the British people. Irish Members brought their claim before Parliament and asked them to fulfil their promise, but Parliament was going to answer in the negative. He and his hon. Friends would be able to tell their people of another instance of unredressed grievance and violated treaty. [*Cheers.*]

MR. KNOX moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned."

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY hoped the hon. Member would not persevere with his Motion. A distinct arrangement was made that the Debate should end to-night. The agreement was made in precise terms, and he trusted it would not be interfered with.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that Irish Members allowed the Debate on the Queen's Speech to be concluded in four or five days, when it could have been continued much longer. In return they had got one Government day. To a large section of the House justice had certainly not been done by this Debate.

Mr. KNOX said that, in the circumstances, he would not persevere with his Motion, although, owing to the course the Debate had taken, a large section of Irish Members had been debarred from expressing their views upon the question. If he withdrew his Motion it was only fair the Leader of the House should promise that a reasonable opportunity should be afforded for the discussion of what was practically the same question when the Budget came on.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY did not know what course hon. Gentlemen would take on the Budget; he must wait until that time came. He had never, he hoped, shown any desire to unduly interfere with the Debate.

Mr. T. M. HEALY, rising to a point of order, said he presumed the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley could not be put after half-past Five.

*Mr. SPEAKER said it would be his duty, assuming that the Motion, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," be defeated, to put the Question, "That these words be there inserted." If any Debate arose that Question could not be put unless the Closure was moved and carried.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked when the Government proposed to introduce the Budget?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Not till after Easter, but I hope not very long after that date.

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) earnestly supported the appeal that when the Budget did come on, an opportunity would be afforded hon. Members of fully discussing this subject.

Question put. The House divided:—Ayes, 157; Noes, 317. (Division List—No. 154—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, W.)
Arch, Joseph
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, M. (Limerick W.)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. J. Blair (Clackm
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carew, James Laurence
Causton, Richard Knight
Clancy, John Joseph
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Collery, Bernard
Colville, John
Commins, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal, N.)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dane, Richard M.
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Dillon, John
Donelan Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Southt'on)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Farrell, Thomas J. (Kerry, S.)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William (Dublin)
Finucane, John
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gibney, James
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harrington, Timothy
Harrison, Charles
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Thomas J. (Wexford)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift

McCartan, Michael
McCarthy, Justin
McDonnell, Dr. M.A. (Queen's C.)
McGhee, Richard
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
Mandeville, J. Francis
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Minch, Matthew
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morley, Rt.Hn. John (Montrose)
Murnaghan, George
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shee, James John
Sheehy, David
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Tuite, James
Tully, Jasper
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Edinburgh)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woods, Samuel
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir Thomas Esmonde and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerld. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Captain
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bigham, John Charles
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (Lynn Regis)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Campbell, James A.
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Davies, Horatio D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Evershed, Sydney
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heath, James

Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt.Hn.LordArthur(Down)
Hill, Rt.Hn.A.Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare,Edw.Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hopkinson, Alfred
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea)
Kemp, George
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lawson,SirWilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn,SirDillwyn-(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col.A.R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col. CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Right Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
McCalmont,Maj.-Gen.(Ant'mN
McCalmont, Col. J.(Antrim, E.)
McEwan, William
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Edward Wm. J.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring,Hon.W. F.
Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
Mellor Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray,Rt.Hn.A.Graham(Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pierpoint, Robert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Priestley, SirW.Overend(Edin.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, William Cuthbert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir MatthewW.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon.Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Baron James F. de
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenh'm)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster,SirR.E.(Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams,JosephPowell-(Birm.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

Tellers for the Noes, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

*Mr. SPEAKER put the Question, "That those words be there added."

Mr. T. M. HEALY objected.

Debate accordingly adjourned.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday 21st April read, and discharged.—Bill withdrawn.

ELECTION PETITIONS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (VACATION OF SEATS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

RATING (PLACES OF WORSHIP AND SCHOOLS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 30th April.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

ACCOUNTANTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 12th May.

PRISON MADE GOODS (IMPORTATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 28th April.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 4th May.

ACCOUNTANTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 29th April.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 28th April.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 4th May.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LAND TENURE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 27th April.

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ALIENS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 28th April.

TITHE REDEMPTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 26th April.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 4th May.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tuesday next till Wednesday 28th April.

House Adjourned at Ten Minutes before Six o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 1st April 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (BRISTOL LINES) BILL [H.L.].

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR) moved, "That this Bill be now read the Third time." He said the Bill was promoted by the Great Western Railway Company for the purpose of making certain new lines in the immediate neighbourhood of Bristol. Notice of opposition had been given to the Third Reading of the Bill, and, therefore, in accordance with the usual practice, the Chairman of Committees did not move the Third Reading. Another noble Lord interested in the Bill was to have done so, but he being unable to be present, he had been appealed to to take the noble Lord's place. He need hardly say that, on a matter of this kind, he did not speak for the Government, but as one who had for some years endeavoured to take some interest in Private Bill legislation as carried on in that House. It was a very unusual course to oppose the Third Reading of a Private Bill on such grounds as those likely to be put before their Lordships. This Bill had been through the usual routine of Private Bills in that House. All the notices under the Standing Orders were given at the usual time of year. The Bill was opposed by another railway company, and this opposition was inquired into by a Committee of the House in the usual way, presided over by Lord Camperdown, and that Committee decided that the Bill should be allowed to proceed. So far as its unopposed provisions were concerned, it had been dealt with by the Chairman of Committees in the usual way, and he did not propose to go into the merits of the Bill. It was sufficient to say that there was practically no landowning opposition in the ordinary sense of the term. The Corporation of Bristol were in favour of the Bill, and the Bill, which actually authorised the construction of the railway in respect of which the opposition was suggested, had actually passed the House. The provisions in this Bill for constructing the railway were only to be brought into effect in the event of that Bill not passing, or in the event of the powers which were already given under that Bill not being put into execution. Therefore, so far as this House was concerned, it would not necessarily make the slightest difference whether this Bill was passed or not, because the powers for making these lines had already received the sanction of their Lordships. A Paper had been circulated giving in some detail the grounds thought sufficient by those opposing the Bill to warrant their Lordships in rejecting it. He would say nothing against the work of the ladies who were opposing the Third Reading of the Bill. He was prepared to take it entirely at their own valuation. But the excellence of their work had nothing whatever to do with the question before their Lordships—whether a certain railway should be made which commenced at some point within, he believed, 160 yards of the dwelling which they had erected. This was not the case of a railway coming to a district in which there was no railway before. The railway was opened for traffic some time before this religious community went to the place at all. The railway which passed their building was authorised in 1866, opened for traffic in 1872, and passed under the control of the Great Western Company in 1876, after which considerable traffic passed along that line. The ladies began to build their house a year later, in 1877, and it was not opened and their work there was not begun until 1879. Therefore, they had come to the railway, not the railway to them. But the matter did not end there, because they made the assertion that—

> "if the work was carried out they would be practically in the middle of a shunting and goods yard half a mile in length, the central portion being right under their windows,"

and that—

> "the evils, hitherto borne as inevitable with so much difficulty, will be increased and multiplied to a practically indefinite extent."

Even if this were accurate, he did not think it afforded ground for their opposition. They claimed that their residence should be bought by the company, but if everyone whose residence was within 200 yards of public works were to be allowed to claim that their property should be bought their Lordships would introduce a principle quite novel in these matters, and would put an end to many public enterprises. He was informed that so far from an increase of traffic near these ladies' house being probable, it would not be the case. At present the railway which passed their buildings commenced two or three hundred yards after it passed them. One of the proposals of the Bill was to continue that line and take the traffic round another way, so he was informed that there would be less traffic passing the buildings and less shunting than in the past. He did not, however, rest upon that plea because it depended largely on the merits of the Bill which the House was not a fit tribunal to discuss at any length upon such an occasion as that. He did not know whether the opposition to the Bill would be persevered in to the extent of moving the rejection of the Bill. He hoped not. He had stated shortly the case for the Bill, and hoped it would be read a Third time.

VISCOUNT HALIFAX moved to leave out the word "now," and to add at the end of the Question the words "this day six months." He apologised to their Lordships for the unusual course of opposing such a Bill as this on the Third Reading. But the case was quite exceptional, and under the circumstances no other course was possible, if the injustice and injury which the Bill, as it stood, inflicted upon the Sisters of Charity at St. Raphael's, Bristol, was to be prevented. The Bill, if it passed, authorised the Great Western Railway to execute works which would render the House of Charity uninhabitable and useless for the purposes of public utility for which it was built. At the time of the Second Reading of the Bill the Sisters were in correspondence with the directors of the Great Western Railway Company in the hopes of obtaining reasonable compensation in an amicable manner, and it seemed inconsistent with that attitude to oppose the Bill. The Sisters were advised that they could not, under the Standing Orders of your Lordships' House, be heard before your Lordships' Committee, inasmuch as the Bill did not propose actually to take their property. Not having come to an agreement with the directors of the Great Western Railway Company, they were driven, therefore, to oppose the Third Reading with a view to obtaining proper consideration for their claim. The facts of the case were these. For nearly 30 years the Sisters of Charity had been engaged in charitable work in Bristol, and their house was the headquarters of other dependent houses in the neighbourhood, and in more distant parts of the kingdom. Their present house was built between the years 1877 and 1879, at a cost amounting, together with the price of the freehold of the land, to about £11,000, on the site of former buildings occupied by the community since its commencement. The site was chosen on account of its being in a central position for their work and in proximity to St. Raphael's Church, whose vicar was then as now the chaplain of the community. Acting under parliamentary powers, the Great Western Railway Company, some years ago, opened a shunting yard in the immediate vicinity of the House of Charity, eventually causing the Sisters great inconvenience by night as well as by day from the vibration, smoke, and noise proceeding from the increased traffic. By the present Bill the Great Western Railway proposed to add very largely to the volume of traffic and shunting work close to the house, and if this were done it would be rendered uninhabitable; and as it would be almost, if not quite, unsaleable, the Sisters, if not compensated, would have to provide themselves with another headquarters at a ruinous sacrifice, for which they had not the funds. It was, he believed, said that the present house was built after the Great Western Railway had opened its shunting yard, and that the new works, by providing an exit, might diminish the shunting immediately under the Sisters' house. In regard to the building of the house it was quite true that it was built after the railway had been commenced, but no one at that time could have foreseen the changes which the railway had made in the neighbourhood. Indeed, at first, and for many years, the harbour railway was no nuisance, and it was not till the Great

Western Railway started their shunting lines and took to sorting a large portion of their goods' traffic under the windows of the Sisters that the nuisance became serious. In regard to the exit afforded by the Bill, it must be remembered that an exit was also an entrance, and it was not to be supposed the Great Western Railway Company would spend £500,000 on new works if they were merely expecting to maintain the present volume of traffic. The Great Western Railway Company had purchased the site of the late gaol, the boundary wall of which was not 100 feet distant from the House of Charity on the east side; and a large amount of house property, extending for a quarter of a mile to the west of St. Raphael's Church, which touched the House of Charity on the other, had also been acquired as part of the scheme. To feed these yards they were applying for powers to construct several miles of harbour railways, and to connect them with the shunting yards, and with their general system. The cost of the contemplated works was stated before the Committee of their Lordships' House to be about £500,000, independently of what was proposed to be raised by the Corporation of Bristol; and the fact remained that if the works were carried out as proposed, the House of Charity, with St. Raphael's Church on the west and three small villas to the east, would be practically in the middle of a shunting and goods yard half a mile in length, the central portion being right underneath its windows, and with all the evils which have been hitherto borne as inevitable increased and multiplied to a practically indefinite extent. Their Lordships could judge what the result of the works on such a scale were likely to be on any house standing in the middle of them. The Sisters did not deny that they were bound to bear all inconveniences incurred under existing Acts of Parliament. Their case was that when they built their house the inconvenience was slight to begin with, that no one at the time could have foreseen what had been done even under the existing Act, while the present Bill gave such unlimited powers of increasing those inconveniences that they had an equitable claim. The Great Western Railway Company admitted in their evidence before the Committee of their Lordships' House that they were making the part of Bristol in which the House of Charity is situated their great goods depôt. They had no room at their Bristol station. It must in the long run be evident that they could not have a religious house in the midst of a railway station. The Sisters submitted in view of these facts that a clause should be added to the Bill requiring the Great Western Railway Company to acquire the House of Charity under the compulsory powers of the Land Clauses Act. He would merely add that the community, which supported itself, consisted of 46 persons, who were doing an admirable work in religious visits to the poor, managing an industrial school, and convalescent home work, not only in four parishes in Bristol but in Liverpool and Leeds. Several of the community had met their deaths in connection with the Universities Mission in Central Africa; and they were supported in their opposition to the Bill by the Bishop of the diocese, who was well acquainted with the work they were carrying on, but who was unfortunately, to his great regret, prevented being present that day. He thought if ever there was a case for generous treatment this was one. Some clause ought at least to be inserted in the Bill before it was allowed to pass, compelling equitable compensation to be given to the Sisters.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN, as one who sat on the Committee to which the Bill was referred, pointed out that the Sisterhood did not appear before the Committee for the good reason that they had no *locus standi.* Their house was situated not on any new railroad, or near any new railroad it was proposed to make by the Bill, but 150 yards distant from the terminus; and, therefore, they were not, strictly speaking, affected by the new works. The question was whether the railways which had been authorised by this Bill and which were, with one exception, dock railways, were likely to increase the nuisance which already existed, and could not be diminished. This matter, of course, was not referred to, and did not come specially before, the Committee, because there was no petition with reference to it. But at the same time, as the Committee was sitting yesterday on other matters, and the noble Viscount had placed this Notice on the

Table of their Lordships' House, the Committee thought it desirable to call the solicitor and officials of the Great Western Railway Company, who produced plans and photographs, now lying on the Table of the House, from which their Lordships could see how the works affected the house of the Sisterhood. So far as he could form an opinion he was extremely doubtful whether any additional inconvenience would arise to the Sisterhood at all. He should be very sorry, and of course their Lordships would all be sorry, that possible inconvenience should arise to the Sisterhood; but at the same time, unless they were prepared to force a railway to purchase all the property in its neighbourhood, he really did not think, himself, that this House could very well interfere. When it was further stated that the Sisterhood had no *locus standi* whatsoever, and could not appear before the Committee, he was afraid it was just one of those cases in which Parliament was not able to do anything. He thought it would be very unreasonable if their Lordships were on this account to throw out the Bill. He did not know that the noble Viscount had suggested that extreme course, but even with regard to compelling a railway to purchase property, he was afraid under existing circumstances they should hardly be justified in taking that course.

THE EARL OF MORLEY (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) observed that the noble Viscount had pursued a somewhat unusual course in moving the rejection of this Bill, which was one of great importance to Bristol, involving the construction of a large number of dock railways, which had been sanctioned by the Great Western Railway Company, under an agreement with the Bristol Corporation. The noble Lord had moved the rejection of the Bill, or, at any rate, had moved or suggested the insertion of certain clauses for the protection of this Sisterhood. There was no doubt the Sisterhood did most excellent work, and he was quite certain their Lordships would sympathise with them very much if they suffered the damage which they alleged they would from the construction of these lines. But he would ask the House to consider the question from the technical point of view. From the technical point of view the Sisterhood was merely the owner of land and of a site adjoining but not taken by the railway. Under these conditions, as Lord Camperdown had said, they had no *locus standi* before the Committee to which the Bill was referred. He would ask the House if they would not be taking an unusual course, and one without precedent, if they were to allow parties who, under their rules, had no *locus* before the Committee to obtain a *locus* before the House, and to obtain exceptional relief. It seemed to him that such a course would establish a precedent of the very greatest danger, and he was perfectly certain the House would not, for a moment listen to it. He feared the Sisterhood must be left to the ordinary remedies of the Law under the Lands Clauses Act, or any other legal procedure they might have recourse to. He did not for a moment wish to go into the merits of the case, for he ventured to think that without much more careful investigation than the House in general could give to it, it would be quite impossible to weigh the merits of the different statements put forward. The noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill stated that the interests of the Sisterhood would be damaged, while two other noble Lords had given reasons, with which he was inclined to agree, that the outlet offered by the new Great Western line would tend to decrease the traffic on the piece adjoining the premises of the Sisterhood. But he did not want to discuss the merits of the case, that would be outside the question before the House. Sympathising as he did with the fear expressed of inconvenience to the Sisterhood, he yet must confidently say that if their Lordships were to reject the Bill, or even give special relief to these Sisters, who were expressly excluded by general rules from appearing before the Committee, their Lordships would establish a dangerous precedent, and one that had never, so far as he knew, been allowed up to the present time. He, therefore, urged the House most strongly to pass the Third Reading of the Bill.

VISCOUNT HALIFAX said he was extremely unwilling to divide the House, and he had some hope that there would have been an expression of opinion in favour of a clause providing equitable compensation to the Sisterhood.

On the Question whether the word "now" shall stand part of the Motion, resolved in the affirmative; Bill read 3^a accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a To-morrow. (The Marquess of Lansdowne.)—[No. 40.]

LAND COMMISSION (RULES).

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN: In bringing this question under your Lordships' notice, I have no wish to enter into any Debate. I merely wish to ascertain from Her Majesty's Government if these Rules are before the House, when they were presented, and whether, and within what period it will be within the liberty of any Member of the House to raise a Debate on the subject. I, therefore, ask whether the Rules of the Irish Land Commissioners, dated the 2nd of January 1897, and presented to the House of Commons on the 5th of March 1897, have yet been presented to this House; and, if so, at what date; and up to which date it will be competent for this House to move an address to Her Majesty to reject the said Rules, or any of them?

THE EARL OF RANFURLY: In reply to the Question I beg to say that the Rules referred to of the Irish Land Commissioners were presented to both Houses of Parliament on the same date—namely, the 5th March. In pursuance of Sub-section 3 of Section 50 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, it is competent for either House to present an Address to Her Majesty within the next subsequent hundred days praying that any one or more of these Rules may be annulled.

House Adjourned at Ten Minutes before Five o'Clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Ten o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 1*st April* 1897.

TOWN HOLDINGS (TENANTS' COMPENSATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from To-morrow till Friday, 9th April.

VERMINOUS PERSONS BILL.

Second Reading deferred from To-morrow till Friday, 9th April.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL.

SIR H. VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said that, in consequence of a Bill having similar objects in view having been sent down to that House from the Lords, he begged to move that the Order of the Day for the Second Reading of the Working Men's Dwellings Bill should be read and discharged.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 21st April read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

QUESTIONS.

TELEGRAPH ADDRESSES (BARROW-IN-FURNESS).

MR. C. W. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that Mr. Joseph Huartson and Mr. Walter Cooper, who have been for many years resident in Barrow-in-Furness, their residences being near the post office and the former being well-known as the secretary of the Agricultural Society, who are the only persons on the Burgess Roll holding their respective names, and who have for several years received telegrams addressed "Joseph Huartson, Barrow-in-Furness," and "Walter Cooper, Barrow-in-Furness," have recently received notice from the Post Office that telegrams so addressed will not be delivered owing to insufficient address, the Post Office notice saying they cannot deliver the telegram owing to being insufficiently addressed with their names, designation, and correct address; will he explain why the Post Office are declining to deliver telegrams in which only the Christian name and surname of the addressee and the name of the town are given, with the object of securing payment of £1 1s. per annum for registering an address; and whether he will instruct the Post Office officials at Barrow-in-Furness to take the same steps to deliver telegrams as they do in the case of letters?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr R. W. HANBURY, Preston): These gentlemen have for several years received telegrams addressed "Huartson, Barrow-in-Furness (not Joseph Huartson, Barrow-in-Furness), and "Walter Cooper, Barrow-in-Furness." This, however was done without the knowledge of the Department in London, and as soon as the attention of the London Office was drawn to it, directions were given to stop the practice. Mr. Huartson and Mr. Cooper accordingly received notice on the 1st October last, and were given until the 1st of January to effect registration. The Department takes some trouble to deliver telegrams the addresses of which appear to be defective by accident and not by design; but it would be contrary to the interests of the public that it should allow its officers' time to be spent in procuring the delivery of telegrams which are systematically sent with insufficient addresses. Mr. Joseph Huartson has a notification printed on his letter paper that his telegraphic address is "Huartson, Barrow-in-Furness," and Mr. Cooper has a notification that his telegraphic address is "Walter Cooper, Barrow." These cases, therefore, are not cases of addresses defective by any accident. These gentlemen seek to obtain for nothing the advantage of an abbreviated address, for which other people have to pay one guinea a year, and the Postmaster General does not think he would be acting fairly if he did not require them to pay the prescribed fee.

Mr. C. W. Cayzer.

POST OFFICE TELEPHONE EXCHANGE.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will state what increase or decrease (if any) has taken place in the number of Telephone Exchanges which the Post Office has in the United Kingdom; what increase or decrease (if any) has taken place in the total number of subscribers to such Exchanges; what are the new Exchanges (if any) which have been opened; and what are the Exchanges (if any) which have been abandoned since the period dealt with in the Return, No. 119, of the present Session, showing particulars regarding such Exchanges for the year 1894?

*MR. HANBURY: There has been an increase of one in the number of Post Office Telephone Exchanges in the United Kingdom, while the total number of subscribers to such Exchanges has decreased by 102. The new Exchange which has been opened is at Abergavenny. No Exchanges have been abandoned since the date of the Returns.

NORTH MUNDHAM BOARD SCHOOLS (SUSSEX).

MR. J. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that in the Board School of North Mundham, Sussex, the Church Catechism is regularly taught to children, and that Nye's "Popular History of the Church of England" is also given for home reading and for examination; and whether steps will be taken to compel the discontinuance of these practices?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): I am aware of the facts stated. The Committee of Council are in communication with the School Board as to the alleged teaching of the Church Catechism. Nye's History is not a religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination, and seems to me to be written in a spirit of moderation and tolerance.

ORMATHWAITE ESTATE (LISTOWEL).

*Mr. M. J. FLAVIN (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he can state on what grounds the application of an evicted tenant on the Ormathwaite property, named Thomas Walsh, for reinstatement, was refused; (2) whether the estate is under the direct control of the landlord, or have receivers been appointed over the property; and, if so, who are they; (3) whether he can state the annual cost to the ratepayers of the police barrack which is on the farm; and (4) whether, in view of the peaceable condition of the district, which is in the Listowel police division, steps will be taken to remove the extra police?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I am unable to answer the first question. The estate is under the direct control of the landlord and a trustee. A protection post was established on the farm shortly after the murder, in 1888, of John Foran, who had taken the farm from which Walsh was evicted, and the post is still necessary for the protection of the caretaker in charge of the farm. The annual cost to the ratepayers of the two constables employed at the post is about £69.

*Mr. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that all the other evicted tenants on this property have been reinstated, and will he say why an exception is made in this tenant's case?

[No answer was given.]

URBAN ROADS AND FOOTPATHS.

Mr. H. BROADHURST (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will consider the advisability of enabling county councils to take over the roads and footpaths of urban district councils in cases where both authorities are desirous this should be done; and whether he will bring in a Bill for that purpose?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I do not myself contemplate bringing in a Bill for the purpose referred to, but there is a Bill now before the House dealing with a cognate matter, and when that Bill comes on for discussion, I shall be very glad to consider this Question in connection with it.

ATTORNEYS (RHODESIA).

Mr. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Scots law agents (*i.e.* duly qualified Scots solicitors) who do not happen to be also members of the small private Edinburgh body known as Writers to the Signet are admitted to practice in Rhodesia as attorneys without further examination on producing proof of their admission as solicitors in Scotland; and, if not, will he explain on what grounds?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): I understand that the answer is in the affirmative. According to Sub-section (*b*) of Section 1 of the High Commissioner's Proclamation of 8th April 1892, "Solicitors or Attorneys-at-Law, or Scottish Writers to the Signet, duly admitted and enrolled and under no disability to practice in England, Ireland, Scotland, or the Cape Colony, may be admitted and enrolled to practice as Attorneys-at-Law."

GAS POISONING (ALLEGED).

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department is he aware that the large English Gas Companies are now making large quantities of water gas and turning it into the mains with coal gas, so that some cases of gas poisoning have already occurred; and, will any means be taken to protect the public against the admixture of this most poisonous substance with coal gas?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon): No, Sir, I am not aware that cases of gas poisoning have occurred from the cause suggested by the hon. and learned Member, but if he will be good enough to favour me with any instance I will cause inquiry to be made.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (INDIAN TROOPS).

Mr. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether arrangements are completed for the presence of Indian troops on the occasion of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee; and, if so, will he state how many officers and how many men are expected; whether he will ask the Government of India to arrange that of the officers as many as possible should be native officers; and, whether it is proposed to include in the contingent any representatives of the Volunteer regiments in India, as well as of the Parsees who are enrolled in some of those regiments?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Twenty-one native officers of Indian cavalry and 20 representatives of the Imperial service troops are expected from India in order to take part in the celebration of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign. I have received no proposals from India for the deputation of any Volunteers from that country.

ANTI-PLAGUE INOCULATION (INDIA).

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the systems of anti-plague inoculation which are being tried in India by Dr. Haffkine and Dr. Yersin, and the statement contained in a recent official dispatch from Bombay that 3,296 persons have already been inoculated by Dr. Haffkine; and whether, with a view of securing a prompt test of the protective and curative value of the procedures referred to, he would take steps to secure an independent official registration of all anti-plague inoculations, so as to enable the practical efficacy of the systems to be tested by subsequent comparison between the disease and death rates among inoculated and non-inoculated persons?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have been in frequent telegraphic correspondence with the Bombay Government regarding inoculations against plague. I have requested the Bombay Government to report periodically the number and the results of inoculations under Dr. Haffkine's and Dr. Yersin's systems separately. As yet I have received no report regarding Dr. Yersin's work beyond the telegram on page 15 of the Plague Papers distributed to hon. Members on Tuesday last. The results of inoculation are ascertained and reported as far as possible, as will be seen from the telegrams on pages 15 and 109 of the Blue Book, and from the Bombay Government plague telegram of March 29 published in yesterday's newspapers.

WEIGHING CATTLE.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether an auctioneer, who advertises and sells cattle by public auction, and whose mart has not been exempted from the provisions of the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1891, is bound to weigh and deliver a ticket specifying the true weight of cattle, whenever required by a buyer to do so, or is entitled to keep the buyer waiting until the end of the sale (sometimes two or three hours) on the ground that the weighing machine is being used as a collecting pen for holding cattle previous to sale, and that the machine must be balanced and the cattle weighed afterwards; and whether a buyer is entitled to have his cattle weighed in hundredweights and pounds, in the same way that coals are weighed under the Third Schedule of the Weights and Measures Act, 1889?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The law provides that in every auction mart at which cattle are habitually or periodically sold there shall be some person appointed to have charge of the weighing machine which is required to be provided, and if any such person refuses or neglects to weigh cattle when required, or to deliver a ticket specifying the true weight of the cattle weighed, he is liable to be fined. Whether it would be held that such liability would be incurred under circumstances such as those suggested is a hypothetical question with regard to which I do not feel that I could with advantage express an opinion. I am advised that a buyer of cattle is only entitled to require such information as to their weight to be given to him as is afforded by the particular machine provided at the market or mart at which they are sold.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (PAUPERS).

MR. J. G. HOLBURN (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Scottish Local Government Board can empower parish councils to make a special allowance to recipients of parochial relief and poorhouse inmates; and, if so, will the Board give parish councils permission to make such special allowance in June next during the time of national rejoicing on the occasion of Her Gracious Majesty's Diamond Jubilee?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Local Government Board has no power to sanction, nor have parish councils power to incur, illegal expenditure, and expenditure in excess of necessary maintenance would be clearly illegal.

MILITARY TRAINING CAMP (SCOTLAND).

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether inquiry has been made as to the possibility of acquiring a sufficient area for a camp of exercise in Scotland at a reasonable price and at a convenient centre; or if, in the absence of such a report, instructions will now be sent to the General Officer commanding in Scotland to make such preliminary investigation as may be necessary to decide the question of whether this acquisition, if desired, could be made by Government?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Secretary of State is fully alive to the desirability of a training camp for Scotland, but no information is before him to show that a suitable area could be procured in Lanarkshire or in any other convenient part of the country. Barry Links has recently been acquired at large cost for camping purposes. It has an area of 3,461 acres; and will, it is hoped, be used largely by the regular and auxiliary forces in Scotland. It is, however, to be observed that the troops in Scotland belong, for the most part, to the auxiliary forces; and the military authorities hold that they derive great advantage by being brought in detachments to train with the regulars in the southern camps.

LAND COMMISSION.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath was heard on the second statutory application, and what was the result?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The application to fix a fair rent for a second statutory term in this case was heard on February 10th, and it is expected that the decision will be announced next week.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could explain how it was that these gentlemen had taken two months to make up their minds in reference to this case.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir. I am unable to give any explanation on the subject.

MR. R. McGHEE (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will make inquiries as to the correspondence which has passed between William Livingstone, of Annsborough House, Lurgan, and the Land Commission respecting the purchase of a farm of land on the estate of Mary Leney, in the townland of Drumnakelly, conveyed by a vesting order as 30a.2r. 10p. by the Land Commission; whether he is aware that, on a survey being made since by a highly qualified surveyor, the farm has been found to contain only 29a. 2r. 5p. or 1a. 0r. 5p. less than Mr. Livingstone has been charged for as conveyed to him; and whether he will communicate with the Land Commission with the view of having Mr. Livingstone recouped out of the balance of the purchase money still in the hands of the Land Commission?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: An agreement for purchase of the holding referred to was signed by Mary Livingstone who subsequently conveyed her interest to William Livingstone. The agreement was for the purchase of the holding therein described as containing 30a. 2r. 10p. The Land Commission Inspector reported that the area appeared correct and the boundaries correctly marked on the map, and the holding was accordingly described in the vesting order as containing 30a. 2r. 10p. or thereabouts. The Land Commission has no reason to believe that this description is inaccurate, but it should be borne in mind that what is vested in the purchaser is the holding as in the occupation of the purchasing tenant. What was agreed to be purchased was the holding; the purchase money was arrived at by agreement between the parties, and would not be affected by such an error in the description of the area, if such had been made. The holding which he contracted to buy has been vested in the purchaser, and he does not appear to have suffered any injury for which he should be recouped.

Mr. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the important question as to the Ulster custom raised by Mr. Hume, B.L., before the Chief Land Commission at its recent sitting in Belfast, as published in the Belfast papers of Saturday last: whether the Sub-Commissioners and Court valuers have been in the habit of making no allowance in rent in respect of rights under the Ulster custon over and above the exemptions given for improvements made by the tenant: and whether considering this serious infringement of the Ulster custom, some steps will be taken to protect the tenant farmers of Ulster in the full enjoyment of that custom which Parliament has already recognised as their right?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Questions as to allowance from rent in respect of the Ulster Tenant-right custom were raised in several cases before the Land Commission at their recent sittings at Armagh and Belfast. The questions referred to were so raised on the re-hearing of cases by way of appeal from the decisions of Sub-Commission Courts. Judgment has not yet been given and the Land Commission are unable to make any statement in reference to these cases which are still *sub judice*

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman is aware that there is not a single Ulster man a member of that Sub-Commission?

*Mr. SPEAKER: That does not arise out of the Question.

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, considering that according to the recent Return it appears that out of 73 Lay Sub-Commissioners in connection with the Irish Land Commissioners, 43 of them have been

appointed by the present Government temporarily only, and that their period of appointment will expire on the 31st December next, he will make a statement to prevent them from being in any way influenced against the tenants in their decisions by reason of their present appointment being only temporary?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I altogether decline to accept the assumption made in the question that these Assistant Commissioners will be influenced against the tenants by reason of their present appointment being only temporary.

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the feeling of deep dissatisfaction prevailing among the farmers of the North of Ireland, owing to the insufficiency of the reductions of rent for the second statutory term given by the Sub-Commissions now administering the fair rent provisions of the Land Acts there?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware that there are complaints amongst the tenant-farmers in the North of Ireland that the rents are not being sufficiently reduced for the second statutory term. There are corresponding complaints amongst the landlords that the reductions are too great. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. P. FFRENCH (Wexford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that out of 60 cases of appeal by the landlords on the Colclough and other estates in Wexford, the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners were nearly all increased; and (2) will the schedules to be filled by the Chief Commissioners under the new Land Act, showing the ground of increase in each case, be available for inspection; and how can they be obtained?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It is the fact, I am informed, that nearly all the rents referred to in the first paragraph were increased by the Land Commission. The Schedules under Section 1, Sub-section 1, of the Act of 1896, are being prepared in these cases and will shortly be ready. Copies may be obtained in the ordinary way.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many estates have so far been referred by the Land Judge to the Land Commission for valuation under section 40 of the recent Land Act; whether the valuation by the Land Commission is made by persons appointed as Sub-Commissioners, and whether by one or by two; how many Sub-Commissioners the Land Commission have at their disposal for this work; whether Sub-Commissioners are withdrawn for the purpose from the work of fixing fair rents; and whether the Land Commission propose to make arrangements to allocate Sub-Commissioners for this special work?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Fourteen estates have, so far, been referred to the Land Commission by the Land Judge under Section 40 of the Act of 1896. The holdings in all cases under the Land Purchase Acts, as well as cases coming under Section 40, are inspected and valued by the Resident Inspector or by one Assistant Commissioner out of a number of eight who are now employed on this work. Two of these Assistant Commissioners were recently withdrawn from fair-rent work, their places in the latter department being filled. The six remaining Assistant Commissioners have not been employed on fair-rent work for some years past.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND).

MR. J. J. SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, a reserve of £200,000 having been formed under the provisions of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, the Exchequer contribution of £40,000 annually has been, or is about to be, devoted to providing labourers' cottages under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts; and whether the county percentage paid from 1891 until its abolition by the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, has been, or is about to be, devoted to carrying out the Labourers (Ireland) Acts in accordance with the enactment contained in the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: With the permission of my right hon. Friend I will reply to this Question. As regards the Exchequer contribution of £40,000 a year, the regulations respecting it have been settled and the necessary steps are about to be taken with a view to the early distribution of the grant for the financial year ended yesterday. With regard to the county percentage, the final certificate of Transfer to the Local Taxation (Ireland) account was received by the Irish Government on March 29th, and the Government is in communication with the Local Government Board with a view to its application to carrying out the Labourers Acts.

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether £10,000,000 of Guaranteed Land Stock have yet been issued under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891; and, if so, whether the Treasury have availed themselves of the provision contained in section three of that Act to give notice that the Guaranteed Land Stock issued thereafter shall yield dividends only at the rate of 2½ per cent., so that the purchase annuities may be reduced as provided to £3 17s. 6d. per cent.?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Only £2,800,000 stock has at present been created.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (1) whether the making of a grant in aid of technical education by a local authority in Ireland is a condition precedent to the making of a similar grant by the Science and Art Department; and (2) whether the same rule applies to England, Scotland and Wales; if so, how many local authorities in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland respectively made grants in aid of technical education in the years 1895 and 1896, and what were the aggregates of the corresponding sums allocated by the Science and Art Department to England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland respectively?

SIR J. GORST: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. The answer to the second question is, that in England, Scotland and Wales no grant in aid of technical education is made by the Science and Art Department.

LOCAL LOANS STOCK.

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what are the actual rates of interest at which the Treasury borrowed the money issued as Local Loans stock; whether any Local

Loans stock has been issued, what is the aggregate of repayments of Local Loans, and what is the aggregate of borrowings since 1890; and, whether the Government will introduce a Bill to fix the rate of interest charged to local authorities at a sum which will cover the actual cost to the Treasury?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The original Local Loans stock (amounting to £36,526,056, and issued at par on August 16th, 1887,) was raised at 3 per cent. Local Loans stock amounting to £1,927,710, and issued at 103¾ on August 20th, 1888, was raised at about £2 17s. 10d. per cent. Local Loans stock amounting to £2,500,000, and issued at about 100⅝ on February 21st, 1889, was raised at about £2 18s. per cent. *(a)* No Local Loans stock has been issued since 1890. *(b)* The principal repaid between March 31st, 1890, and March 31st, 1897, was £15,876,852. *(c)* The advances to lending departments between March 31st, 1890, and March 31st, 1897, for loans to borrowers were £15,764,269. I hope to introduce a Bill this year to reduce the rate of interest in future cases, but I doubt if it will be possible to apply it to existing loans.

MR. SHEE asked whether that sum had been obtained by tenders in the open market?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I believe so, but, as the hon. Member will see, nothing has been issued since 1890.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the Local Government Board have received complaints from labourers in various parts of Ireland, whose names were given as the "specific instances" in representations under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, as to the letting of the cottages built on these representations to other persons; (2) whether, where a labourer named as "specific instance" seeks the erection of a new house to replace his existing unsanitary house, the Board of Guardians are entitled, having regard to Section 17 of the Labourers Act 1885, to let the new house erected to other than the labourer named as "specific instance" if the latter continues to reside in the house condemned as unfit for habitation; and (3) whether the Inspectors of the Local Government Board have specially reported the unsanitary houses of which evidence was given to them at local inquiries under the Labourers Acts; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to compel the Boards of Guardians, which disregard the law in this matter, to carry out the provisions of Section 17 already mentioned?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The reply to the first paragraph is, Yes. As regards the second paragraph, the Local Government Board are of opinion, to which they have frequently given expression, that the Labourers Acts contemplate that the cottages authorised in pursuance of representations based on the ground of the unfitness of existing houses for human habitation should, when built, be let to the occupants of the condemned houses. Reports of the nature mentioned in the third paragraph have been furnished by the Board's Inspectors, and have, in every instance, been communicated to the Board of Guardians concerned; but the Local Government Board have no power to compel the local authority to let the cottages to the labourers whose houses were mentioned in the original representations.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that James Donohue, the owner of a farm at Ballina, county Clare, refuses to give possession of a plot of land upon which a labourer's cottage was built by the Kildysart Board of Guardians for a labourer named Thomas Ayres, although Donohue contracted to have the cottage completed last November; that it is still unfinished; and that he has been paid for the plot; and whether the Local Government Board will take steps to compel him to complete the cottage and give possession of the land at once, so that Thomas Ayers may do his spring sowing?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A complaint of the nature referred to in the first paragraph has been received by the Local Government Board, who have called for the observations of the Board of Guardians thereon. Pending the receipt of these observations, I am not in a position to reply to the question.

MITCHELSTOWN UNION (ELECTION OF GUARDIANS).

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the recent election of two Poor Law Guardians for the electoral division of Mitchelstown (Mitchelstown Union), at which it appears that the voting papers issued were marked "Election" for one guardian only; that a number of proxy and occupation votes were unduly credited to two candidates on behalf of a landlord and his agent in respect of six evicted farms on the Kingston Estate, that occupation votes in respect of property held upon mortgage were improperly allowed to a Mr. Roche, and that in consequence of general irregularity about one-third of the voting papers were returned unfilled; and (2) whether he will direct an inquiry to be made into these allegations, and into the way this election has been conducted by the Returning Officer, and order another election to be held?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The fact is as stated in the first Question. The Local Government Board are now investigating the matters in connection with this election, and will, if necessary, direct an inquiry to be held into the circumstances of the case.

BAILIEBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS (COUNTY CAVAN).

Mr. S. YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the magistrates of the Bailieborough Petty Sessions District, in the county of Cavan, have acted legally in electing by a majority of one Mr. J. Butler Stopford, of Oristown, county Meath, a licensed publican, and a man in his 41st year, to the office of petty sessions clerk for said district, contrary to the Lord Lieutenant's circular in that behalf addressed to them by the Registrar of Petty Sessions Clerks in Ireland, containing instructions for their guidance and direction; whether the said magistrates were advised by the Chairman, Mr. Starkie, R.M. (who voted against the eligibility of the said J. B. Stopford on the ground of age) to adhere to and observe the rules laid down for their guidance by the Law Officers of the Crown; and whether His Excellency will, in the circumstances, fiat an election held in disregard to his directions, and contrary to the advice of the resident magistrate as contained in said circular; and if in future licensed publicans are to be included in the list of privileged persons, such as retired district inspectors and head constables, in whose favour the limit of age for the office is to be extended?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The election of Mr. Stopford under the circumstances stated in the Question was invalid, and the Lord Lieutenant informed the Registrar of Petty Session clerks some days ago that there must be a fresh election. A licensed publican is debarred by Statute from being appointed to a Petty Sessions clerkship.

PROTESTANT JURORS (IRELAND).

Mr. EDWARD BARRY (Cork Co., S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he will explain why it is that Protestant jurors are summoned more frequently to the Cork Assizes and County Courts than Catholic jurors; whether the Crown officials have received remonstrances from Protestant jurors who are constantly taken away from their business at great inconvenience; and whether he will direct that in future all jurors shall be summoned in rotation?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The jurors are summoned in due rotation as provided by the Statute, and no selection of any kind is made. I am informed that there is no foundation for the statement that Protestant jurors have in fact been summoned more frequently than Catholic jurors, or that any remonstrance has been addressed by the former to any official. I must decline to give any direction such as is mentioned in the Question.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General would consent to and recommend the

Midland Great Western Railway Company to run one third-class carriage on the Irish Limited Mail day trains?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General would have no objection to a third-class carriage being run in the Limited Day Mail trains on the Midland Great Western Railway provided punctuality in the working be maintained, and the hon. Member's suggestion shall be brought under the notice of the Company. The matter, however, is one upon which the Company alone can decide.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that at a meeting of the Bawnboy Guardians on 22nd March a letter, dated 19th March, was read from Mr. Henry Pleus, secretary to the Great Northern Railway Company, stating that up to that date no representations had reached the Great Northern Railway Company on the subject of an acceleration of the morning mails from Dundalk to Enniskillen and Cavan; and whether these representations have since been made; if not, when will they be made?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has no knowledge of the letter stated to have been read at the meeting of the Bawnboy Guardians. His Department is, however, in communication with the Railway Company, and special attention is being directed to the strong desire which has been expressed for an acceleration of the morning mail train from Dundalk to Enniskillen end Cavan.

MR. J. P. FARRELL asked when the Postmaster General entered into communications with the Railway Company.

*MR. HANBURY said he had not the information.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that, in consequence of the present arrangement of carrying the mails by car from Clones to Cavan and Belturbet, the mails for districts west of Belturbet are generally half an hour late in being delivered; whether he is aware that on Saturday morning last they were 1½ hours late; and, can he undertake to bring this matter, as well as the generally unsatisfactory carriage of mails in Cavan, to the notice of the Great Northern Railway Company, with a view to making proposals for a change?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware that in consequence of the present arrangements the mails for places west of Belturbet are generally half an hour late, but he has called for a full report on the subject. He is aware of the exceptional delay on the morning of Saturday, the 27th ultimo, which was due to the late arrival of the mail train at Clones. The railway company, who were communicated with on the subject, have explained that the delay on the 27th ultimo arose from an accident to their signalling apparatus. It would be of no use to approach the company in reference to the conveyance of the night mail by train, unless the Postmaster General were prepared to pay the cost of an additional train, which would certainly not be warranted; but, as I have informed the hon. Member in reply to another question, the Department is in communication with the railway company relative to the desire which exists for an acceleration of the day mail.

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any decision has yet been arrived at respecting the arrival and dispatch of mails between Enniskillen and Bundoran and the intervening districts by rail, instead of, as at present, by car?

*MR. HANBURY: As already explained in answer to previous questions in the House, the Post Office would not be justified in calling upon the railway company to run a special train at the public cost from Dundalk to Enniskillen in connection with the day mail train from Dublin, and the same remark applies with even greater force to places beyond Enniskillen, such as Bundoran. The Secretary in Dublin has, however, been instructed to bring before the railway company the strong desire expressed by the inhabitants of the district for an improvement of their day mail service, in the hope that they may see their way to run a suitable train, but the Department has not yet been made acquainted with the decision of the company.

STAMP DUTY (IRELAND).

MR. EDWARD BARRY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, although the Stamp Act fixes the duty payable on agreements at sixpence, the Inland Revenue authorities in Dublin imposed stamp duty amounting to ten shillings in each case on the forms of agreement entered into with the Board of Guardians of the Clonakilty Union for the erection of cottages under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts; whether he will direct that in future sixpence only will be charged; and whether he will refund the excessive duty paid on application being made therefor?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The agreements, which, under the Stamp Act of 1891, are charged with the duty of sixpence, are agreements under hand only. The agreements to which the hon. Member refers are presumably executed by the Board of Guardians under their Common Seal, and, for that reason, are regarded by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue as chargeable with the general deed duty of ten shillings. It is, of course, open to anyone, who desires to contest the assessment of the Commissioners, to bring a case before the Courts, but I have no power to order abatements or repayments of duty in the particular cases to which the hon. Member refers.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Would the right hon. Gentleman permit the Irish Boards of Guardians to enter into agreements executed by members of the boards, as is done in the case of the town councils?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That is hardly a question for me to answer.

ARMY REGULATIONS (WEARING THE SHAMROCK).

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the case of James Cummins, who served 40 years in the Army, having the medal and clasps, was with General Lord Roberts in the campaign of 1868, was for several years foreman in the Ordnance Store Yard, and finally was suspended and afterwards dismissed owing to his being reported by an officer for wearing a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day; whether the recommendation of the Duke of Connaught that a gratuity be given to James Cummins was carried out; and whether, seeing that this soldier committed suicide in the river Thames and was buried in Aldershot on the 17th November 1896, steps will be taken with a view of allowing the national emblem to be worn in the Army on the several commemoration days in the United Kingdom?

MR. BRODRICK: This man was discharged from the Army with a pension in 1878. He was subsequently employed as a civilian artificer in the Ordnance Store Department. A year ago he was suspended from duty for being drunk and negligent while in charge of the workshops. While under suspension his accounts were examined, and considerable discrepancies were discovered. He was consequently discharged, and no gratuity was awarded him. There is no record of any question having arisen as regards his wearing the shamrock, and the above were the sole grounds of his discharge.

MR. FLAVIN asked whether a recommendation was not made by the Duke of Connaught that a gratuity should be given to this man?

MR. BRODRICK said it was the fact that the Duke of Connaught asked that, in consideration of his long services, a gratuity should be given to him, but the regulations which governed such gratuities made it impossible to comply with that recommendation.

MR. FLAVIN: Would the right hon. Gentleman allow the separate nationalities of the Army when not on parade to wear the national emblem?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the attention of the Secretary of State for War has been called to the fact that Sub-Lieutenant Hollingshed-Blundell, of the King's Royal Rifles, now stationed at Aldershot, on seeing a private soldier, an Irishman named Grindle, with a shamrock in his cap on St. Patrick's Day, ordered him to take that dirty bit of greenstuff out of his cap; and on Grindle telling him that Irish soldiers were allowed to wear the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day, ordered

Grindle to be confined in the guard room; and that Grindle was subsequently punished with seven days' imprisonment and hard labour; whether, in view of the fact that an assurance was given by the late right hon Edward Stanhope, on the 10th June 1892, that if an Irish soldier intimated his desire to his Commanding Officer to wear a shamrock, he thought the Commanding Officer would be willing to grant his wish, some distinct regulation will be established for the guidance of Commanding Officers with respect to the wearing of the shamrock by their men; and whether the conduct of Sub-Lieutenant Blundell and the Commanding Officer will be brought under the notice of the Commander-in-Chief?

MR. BRODRICK: The facts seem to have been substantially as stated in the Question. The late Mr. Stanhope stated that the sanction of the Commanding Officer must first be obtained for the wearing of emblems or any addition to the uniform, and this was not done by the private in question. The particulars of this case, however, were only brought yesterday to the notice of the General Officer commanding at Aldershot, who investigated them. I may add that there is a strong desire on the part of the authorities that all consideration, consistent with discipline, should be shown by Commanding Officers to legitimate national feeling. [*Irish cheers.*]

Mr. MACNEILL: Is it the fact that this man was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment with hard labour, and that the Commanding Officer was not communicated with? By whose order was this man sentenced to seven days' imprisonment?

MR. BRODRICK: I presume by the Commanding Officer. As I said, the facts are now being investigated.

MR. MACNEILL: This is a very important matter. [*Laughter.*] Is the Commanding Officer to investigate the facts after he has sentenced the man to seven days' imprisonment?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is replying to the answer which has been given and arguing upon it.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman as an Irishman approves of that sentence?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must know that that is an improper question to ask.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince): Arising out of that, I would ask whether the private was on parade at the time in uniform, in the ranks, and whether he was punished, not for wearing the shamrock, but for disobeying an order——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the matter is the subject of inquiry now.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): May I ask whether, if any Irish soldiers are to be sent to Crete—[MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!]—they will be allowed to wear the shamrock there? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! If the hon. Member persists so frequently in continuing to ask questions after I have risen and ruled them out of order, I shall have to call the attention of the House to the matter. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will say what proportion of the estimated cost of the changes contemplated in carrying out the recommendations of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee is on behalf of the Telegraph Department of the Post Office in offices where the staffs are not amalgamated, and also the amount involved in improving the position of head postmasters who are receiving less than £500 per annum?

*MR. HANBURY: The estimated average annual cost of giving effect to the recommendations of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee is (1) on Telegraph Account as regards officers where the staff is not amalgamated, £26,480; (2) for improving the position of Head Postmasters receiving less than £500 a year, £3,929.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General (1) on what principle of classification the city of Cork postmen are placed only in the fourth scale under the new classification; (2) whether the second class sorting clerks in Dublin, Belfast, Limerick, and Cork are in receipt of a uniform scale of pay, and why a different practice is to prevail as regards postmen; (3) whether within the last 15 years the maximum pay of second class sorting clerks has increased from 24s. to 40s., and now, by the removal of the barrier between first and second class, to 52s., *i.e.*, by 28s. per week, whereas, in the same period, the maximum salary of postmen in Cork has only increased by 4s., *i.e.*, from 20s. to 24s., and is not at all increased by the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee; and (4) whether the position of the Cork postmen under the new arrangements will be reconsidered?

Mr. HANBURY: The classification of postmen under the new system, as under the old, is based upon the size of the town in which the men work, the cost of living and the value of outdoor labour in the locality, and the postmen at Cork fall into the fourth class under this system. Thus Cork comes within the same category as Limerick and other towns of like character. The pay of sorting clerks is regulated by the amount and character of the work performed, which varies greatly according to the size and importance of the place. The pay of second class sorting clerks at all offices where the staff was divided into classes rose under the old system to 40s. a week. The pay of the first class, however, which at Dublin and Belfast rose to 56s. and 54s. respectively—is at Cork and Limerick only 52s. and 50s. a week. As regards the third paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, the facts are, substantially, as stated as regards the maximum of the scales, but it must be remembered that the postmen will receive the benefit of an increased number of good conduct stripes, each carrying extra pay of 1s. a week, as well as an improved increment of 1s. 6d. instead of 1s. a week. It is not proposed to reconsider the case of the Cork postmen.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY (SIR F. CARRINGTON).

Mr. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies her Major General Carrington, when commanding the British forces in Rhodesia, received (in addition to his full pay and allowances from the War Office) any allowances from the Chartered Company; if so, what; and whether Major-General Carrington sent any Reports to the Colonial Secretary in regard to occurrences in Rhodesia, amongst them one headed "Obstruction from interested parties," and whether these Reports can be laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am informed that Sir F. Carrington, like other Army officers, drew a special field allowance from the funds of the British South Africa Company, but I am unable to say the amount. Sir F. Carrington has furnished a general report on the operations under several different heads, none of which answer the description of the hon. Member. These reports are chiefly concerned with military matters, and I do not think that there would be any advantage in presenting them to Parliament.

Mr. ALLAN: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that, in addition to Major General Carrington's full pay and allowance paid by the War Department, he also accepted from the British South Africa Company a daily allowance of two guineas and a ration allowance of 2s. 6d., and had all his hotel expenses paid to him while at Salisbury by the same Company?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already said I do not know what was the amount of the payment by the South Africa Company.

Mr. ALLAN: May I ask whether it is in accordance with the regulations for the general officer in command to take money from both parties?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of that Question.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a question for the War Office.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a joint memorandum from the Incorporated Association of Head Masters and Mr. Lawrie on matters of public interest connected with the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education; and, if so, whether the memorandum can be printed and laid upon the Table of the House?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have received the two memoranda referred to, and if my hon. Friend will move for an address for the Papers, the Government will have no objection to laying them on the Table of the House.

HANTS REGIMENT (FIRST VOLUNTEER BATTALION).

MR. W. H. MYERS (Winchester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War will he explain why the Officer commanding the First Volunteer Battalion Hants Regiment, having upon the rolls five in excess of the authorised establishment, has been directed by the War Office to strike off five efficient volunteers in preference to five non-efficients?

MR. BRODRICK: A commanding officer is not entitled to enrol volunteers in excess of his establishment. If he does so, when his roll is received, he is ordered to strike off those last enrolled as the men for whom there was no proper vacancy.

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS.

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if he has conferred with the Lord Advocate for Scotland and the President of the Local Government Board, as promised in the Queen's Speech, with the view to preventing the deportation of paupers from Scotland and England to Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Queen's Speech contained no promise of the nature indicated. I have been in conference with the Secretary for Scotland and the President of the Local Government Board, and the subject is still under consideration.

VACCINATION ACTS.

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that the Guardians of the Uppingham Union have, within a period of four and a-half years, caused 16 summonses to be served upon one parent for non-compliance with the Vaccination Law; and if he will direct the attention of the Guardians of that and other unions in which parents are being similarly prosecuted to the letter of the Local Government Board, issued in 1875, in which guardians were warned that when in a particular case repeated prosecutions have failed in their object, it becomes necessary to carefully consider the question whether the continuance of a fruitless contest with the parent may not have a tendency to produce mischievous results, by exciting sympathy with the person prosecuted, and thus creating a more extended opposition to the law?

MR. CHAPLIN: I have no information as to the number of summonses served in the case referred to in the Question, but a copy of the letter issued in 1875 was sent to the Guardians of the Uppingham Union upon this subject, and at their request, as recently as the 15th of January last.

MR. LOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that the police on duty at the sales of goods of persons who refused to comply with the Vaccination Law at Maidenhead acted as bidders and partisans generally; that three men who were committed to prison in default of payment of fines under the same law were conducted through the streets of Maidenhead handcuffed, and were roughly handled by the police; and if he proposes taking any action in the matter?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have made inquiry and am informed that some of the police did bid for some of the things at the public auction; also that the three men referred to were handcuffed, this step being necessary, in the judgment of the police, in order to prevent a rescue. The police, however, emphatically deny that the men were roughly handled, and I see no grounds for believing that such was the case. I propose making further inquiry as to the bidding by the police at the auction.

CRETE.

CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the case that the British Admiral in Cretan waters has asked for the dispatch to Crete of an additional battalion of 600 men; and if it is intended to comply with the request, whether he will urge upon the Government to send an English battalion and not another Schottish one? The HON. MEMBER added: May I also ask whether it was owing to an exaggerated feeling of modesty that the right hon. Gentleman could not give the House any information? [*Cheers.*]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Questions put merely for the purpose of satire are not in order.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): Yes, Sir. The British Admiral asked for more troops on the ground that the number already supplied was insufficient for the garrison of Candia, where there is gathered together a very large population. His request has been agreed to, and the requisite number of troops will be drawn from the Seaforth Highlanders and the Royal Welsh Fusiliers at Malta.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say why a Welsh regiment should be selected for this work? [*Cheers.*]

*MR. CURZON: Can the hon. Member tell me any reason why a Welsh regiment should not be selected? [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] I imagine that Welshmen are as willing to do their duty as any other subjects of the Queen. [*Renewed cheers.*]

MR. McKENNA: Because the work they are asked to do is wholly repugnant to the feelings of the Welsh people. [*Ministerial laughter and Opposition cheers.*]

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Cretan Insurgent Chiefs, who were summoned under a flag of truce to the village outside Retimo by the Consuls, were fired at three times when acting in obedience to the summons by the Turkish troops; whether, notwithstanding the urgent remonstrance of the Russian Consul to one Hushni Pasha, the Governor, who told the Turkish soldiers to stop firing, the Turkish soldiers continued to fire; whether the object of the proposed conference was the explanation by the Consul to the Cretan Chiefs of the meaning of the promised autonomy; and whether the Concert of Europe still maintain that the presence of Turkish troops in Crete are essential to preserve law and order?

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information regarding two statements contained in *The Times* of 31st March, from its correspondents at Canea and Athens respectively, viz., that on Monday last eight delegates from the Cretan insurgents, who were coming to Koube with a flag of truce to confer with the Russian Consul at his request, were attacked by the Turkish troops in the entrenchments, with the consequence that fighting took place, and the conference could not be held; that on Monday last the officers of the Foreign fleets at Retimo, who failed to convey the proclamation of autonomy to the insurgents in consequence of an attack made upon the latter by Turkish troops and Bashi-Bazouks, again endeavoured to carry out their mission, but, owing to the threatening attitude of the Bashi-Bazouks, were compelled to return to the town; and whether, having regard to these incidents (if correctly stated), and to other similar incidents, Her Majesty's Government will endeavour to have steps taken to accelerate the complete removal of the Turkish troops from Crete?

*MR. CURZON: Her Majesty's Consul reported on the 29th that the Russian Consul, who was engaged at Rethymo in preparing for the installation of the Russian troops, invited the insurgents to meet him and the Commander of the Russian troops. Fifty Christians came from the village of Azipopoulo, and sent a deputation of eight to the appointed place twenty minutes from the town; and although carrying a white flag, they were fired upon by Turkish troops from their entrenchments. [*Opposition cheers.*] The Christians abstained from firing—[*Opposition cheers*]—but as the Turks continued, 200 insurgents came down, and fighting continued till evening; the losses were not yet known. The Russian Consul is said to have made strong remonstrances to the Governor, stating that he would report his want of good faith. He subsequently succeeded in interviewing the insurgents at Azipopoulo, and they are reported to have refused autonomy and insisted on union with Greece. [*Opposition cheers.*] As I have previously informed the House, the Government are taking every step in their power to accelerate the withdrawal of the Turkish troops—[*general cheering*]—though it must be clear that until the Powers are in a position to replace the garrisons withdrawn, which they are endeavouring by the dispatch of additional reinforcements to do, they are not justified in exposing to the risk of successful attack the refugee population in the seaport towns. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Arising out of that question, I should like to ask the Under Secretary why the foreign troops did not exercise the same punitive powers and the same amount of force to prevent the Turkish troops from acting in the scandalous way the right hon. Gentleman has just described as they exercised against the insurgents. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of this Question.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there has been a fierce fight at Spinalonga; and did the insurgents, having taken a fort on the mainland, swim out to a small island near the fort and sink a Turkish sailing boat filled with arms?

*MR. CURZON: We have received no information to that effect.

MR. MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask for information?

*MR. CURZON: No, Sir. I am not going to bother our officials about that. [*Ministerial cheers.*] They have enough to do without being plagued by incessant telegrams. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): On behalf of the hon. Member for Sheffield, Ecclesall (Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to a statement by Baron Pinter, and quoted in the *Standard* of 31st March, that the worst atrocities have been committed by the Cretan insurgents upon the Turks of both sexes and all ages, and that the dead bodies of Mussulmans, fearfully mutilated, are to be seen lying everywhere in the interior of Crete; and whether Her Majesty's Government will insist upon the appointment of an International Commission, with efficient interpreters, to examine into and report upon the expropriation and massacre of the Mussulmans of Crete.

MR. CURZON: We have heard nothing of the statement quoted in the *Standard.* Pending the restoration of order in the island, I am afraid it would be premature to discuss the appointment of any such Commission as the hon. Member suggests.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in what respect the object of the Government to restore peace to Crete is served by permitting the importation by the Turks of ammunition into that island?

*MR. CURZON: The Turkish troops still form a considerable portion of the garrison of the towns, and so long as this is the case it is necessary that they should be able to defend the posts held by them against attack. Otherwise the Mussulman population, which is congregated in large numbers in the towns, and which the contingents of the Great Powers have hitherto been insufficient to protect, would be in imminent danger.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice—whether his attention has been drawn to the report in the *Standard* newspaper from Canea, dated yesterday, that Her Majesty's ship *Camperdown,* having shelled the forces of the insurgents at a distance of about four miles, the insurgent flag having been lowered, and the Christians being in full retreat, the Turkish soldiers sallied out of the fort, and established themselves in the insurgents' position, hoisting the Ottoman flag; that about 11.30 the Turks were still engaged in pouring in a rolling fire on the retreating mass of the insurgents; that the latter replied with great spirit, and that until the *Camperdown* took to her heavy shells they rather gained ground than lost it, in spite of a tremendous fire from the Russian and Austrian vessels; and I will ask him whether it is in accordance with the policy of Her Majesty's Government that Turkish troops should be employed under cover of British guns in order to hoist the Ottoman flag as a symbol of Turkish rule in Crete? [*Opposition cheers.*]

*MR. CURZON: We have as yet received no information about the incidents in question. But I do not gather from the

Report to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and which I have read, either that Turkish troops were employed under cover of British guns for an attack on the Cretan insurgents—on the contrary, they appear to have been engaged in repelling an attack—nor that the Ottoman flag was hoisted as the symbol of Turkish rule in Crete. I imagine that wherever the Turkish troops fight they fight under the Turkish flag, and that this is a commonplace of all military proceedings. [*Ministerial laughter.*]

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked, with reference to the statement of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs that further forces are being sent to Crete, as he understood, by the Powers, whether Germany was taking part in that action?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I should prefer notice of that Question.

MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY.

Mr. W. G. MOUNT (Berks, Newbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Chairman of the Derbyshire Quarter Sessions has been advised from the Home Office that magistrates for that county who are shareholders either for their own benefit, or as trustees only, or debenture holders in the Midland Railway Company, are disqualified from acting as Justices under Section 60 of the Licensing Act of 1872, in consequence of that company being licensed to sell excisable liquors in its refreshment rooms in that county?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It is the case that Mr. Barker, the late Chairman, was advised by the Home Office that Justices holding shares in railway companies which retailed intoxicating liquors were disqualified from acting under the Licensing Act of 1872, except in the cases specified in Section 60. I think there can be no doubt the same rule would apply to trustees for shareholders or debenture holders.

AGRICULTURAL RATING ACT.

*Mr. W. C. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether the Local Government Board, in administering the Agricultural Rates Act of last Session, have decided that no grant can be made thereunder in respect of sums required for the service of loans raised by spending authorities, but not actually expended before 25th March 1896; whether in making such decision the Local Government Board have given due effect to the provisions contained in Subsection (1) of Section 4 of the said Act; and whether, if the Local Government Board are not empowered to equitably adjust the amount of the grant to be awarded in each case, the President will introduce or support a Bill conferring upon the Board the necessary power?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Local Government Board have considered that, in determining the grant to be paid to a spending authority under the Agricultural Rates Act, they could not take into account prospective expenditure in years subsequent to that ending on the 31st March 1896, and the Board are not prepared to make exceptions to this rule.

*Mr. QUILTER: I should like to ask my right hon. Friend whether he is aware that in the case of the East Suffolk County Council, when the Department found they could effect a saving, they did not—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of that Question.

CRIMEAN VETERAN (JOHN BRENNAN).

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been directed to a memorial signed by the magistrates, clergymen, and principal inhabitants of Boyle, and also by the Boyle Board of Guardians, in favour of a Crimean veteran, John Brennan, formerly of the 41st Regiment, who was wounded at Sebastopol; whether the local medical men have sent certificates that Brennan bears the marks of wounds received in action; and whether, in view of his age and his poverty, being in receipt of outdoor relief, he will recommend that a compassionate allowance be granted to this veteran soldier?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): The memorial of John Brennan has been received and considered. Medical certificates that he was wounded in action have not been received. I can only repeat the reply I made to the hon. Member on the 28th January last, namely, that there is no record of Brennan being wounded while in the Army, and that his short service of two and a-half years does not qualify him for a special campaign pension.

ESLIN RIVER DRAINAGE SCHEME.

Mr. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the fact that the Congested Districts Board agreed last June to advance a sum not exceeding £200 for the drainage of the Eslin River and its tributaries in Breandrum Division, in South Leitrim, one of the scheduled districts under that Board, whether he can state what steps have been taken to carry out this undertaking?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Congested Districts Board have no information as to the steps taken by the Drainage Board in consequence of the grant of £200 offered as a contribution towards the proposed works.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE (WEXFORD).

Mr. FRENCH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) whether he is aware that orders have been issued to fill only every second vacancy occurring in the Royal Naval Reserve at the port of Wexford; (2) if like orders have been issued to any other Irish port; and (3) if he can state any reasons for reducing the Wexford Naval Reserve force?

*The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. Macartney, Antrim, S.): The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. The orders apply also to Galway, Limerick, Kinsale, and Youghal. This restriction on enrolment was necessitated by the force being in excess of numbers voted.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (RETURN OF ESTATES).

Mr. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the first Return of Estates to which Section 40 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896, is to be applied as directed by the Rules under that section is now ready, and whether it will be printed and presented to the House?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The first Return is now ready. There is nothing in the Statute or Rules requiring that it should be laid upon the Table of the House, but having regard to the general interest taken in the subject at present, the Irish Government are willing that the Return should be laid upon the Table of the House, reserving to themselves the right to decline to do so in the case of future Returns, should it be found undesirable to publish them.

LIGHT DUES ON SHIPPING.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade to what extent the annual revenue raised by the light dues charged on shipping is in excess of the annual expenditure on lighting the coast; whether the only European nations which charge the shipping industry with the cost of maintaining lighthouses are the United Kingdom and Turkey, and whether the United States and Canada have abolished the light dues charged on shipping; and whether, having regard to the importance of the shipping trade of the country, the Government will consider the desirability of abolishing the light dues on shipping?

Mr. RITCHIE: If the hon. Gentleman will refer to the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Mercantile Marine Fund he will see that, taking the years from 1883-84 to 1894-95, the excess of light revenue over light expenditure was for that period £675,000. The average annual excess for the five years ending March 3, 1896, was £130,955. It must, however, be borne in mind that the Legislature has provided that the fund to which light dues are paid shall bear many charges. As stated in my reply to a Question by the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool on the 19th ult., it is not a fact that the United Kingdom and Turkey are the only European nations which charge the shipping industry with the cost of maintaining lighthouses. In some cases dues, though not levied under the name of light dues, are applied to the maintenance of lights and other works connected with harbours and navigation; but it is impossible in a reply to a question to state the exact circumstances of each country. I am unable to hold out any hope of introducing a Bill for the abolition of light dues.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) asked whether it was not the fact that an enormous amount of money was spent for the benefit of the shipping trade of the country?

Mr. LEWIS asked how the charge of the present light dues was justified, seeing that the receipts exceeded the expenditure?

Mr. RITCHIE: I am not aware to what particular assistance the hon. Member for Roscommon refers. As to the other Question, there is no doubt that within the last three or four years there has been a considerable excess in the dues collected over the moneys expended on the lights. On the other hand, for a series of years the fund was in great financial straits, and a considerable amount of money had to be borrowed at various times—as much as £300,000 in all—to provide for the necessary expenditure on lights. That money has now been entirely repaid, but I have already undertaken that, if time can be found, I shall be glad to introduce a Bill for the purpose of rearranging the light dues; and, of course, if it be possible at a future time to reduce the contribution, we shall be glad to do so. But we are proposing to spend considerably more on the light service than has been spent in the past.

RURAL AUXILIARY POSTMEN

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will secure that rural auxiliary postmen in Ireland doing four or four and a half hours' duty will be allowed twelve week days' holiday, two-thirds pay when sick, and 15s. yearly boot money; and will men doing four hours' duty be classed as assistant postmen; and, if not, what is meant by the statement in the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee that it is impossible the duties of assistant postmen should occupy exactly six hours, but that the great majority of assistant postmen should have six hours, and that none should have less than four hours?

Mr. HANBURY: In accordance with the recommendation of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, rural auxiliary postmen doing five hours' work and upwards will in future be entitled to the privileges described. But there is no intention of extending these privileges to men doing only four or four and a half hours' duty. Auxiliary postmen will not, under the recommendation of the Committee, be classed as assistant postmen, unless they have been telegraph messengers, or have served in the Army or Navy, and are waiting for established appointments. Assistant postmen will be entitled to an annual holiday of twelve week days, two-thirds pay when sick, and a boot allowance of 15s. a year, provided their day's work is not less than four hours.

IRISH ACCOUNT (SAVINGS).

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if the undertaking to bring Irish savings in expenditure to a separate Irish account is confined to retrenchments in the Irish judicial system, or covers savings made in the entire Irish establishment; and, in the former event only, could he explain what is the ground of distinction between different classes of savings?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: As I explained the other day, I referred to the salaries of Judges, which, in the event of the abolition of Judgeships, would permanently cease. I do not see how a temporary saving, which might be turned into an increase of expenditure by the next year's Estimates, or even by a Supplementary Estimate in the same year, could be treated in the same way.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Are no other savings except the savings on the Judges' salaries to be credited to the Irish account?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I should like to begin with that, and see what we can do..

Mr. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Did not the words of the right hon. Gentleman apply to legal and judicial establishments in Ireland?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: If we can find any other salaries I should be delighted to deal with them in the same way.

HIGH SHERIFF (CARRICKFERGUS).

Mr. D. KILBRIDE (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the refusal of Captain Higginson to act as high sheriff of the county of the town of Carrickfergus, (1) whether Captain Higginson has any lands within the county; and, if not, why he was nominated as high sheriff for that county; (2) whether he is aware that in 1893 Mr. Standish Grady Parkes-Hutchinson, who was under warrant appointed by the then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as high sheriff of Queen's County, refused to accept and take on himself the office of sheriff, notwithstanding that he had sufficient lands to answer the Queen and her people, and that the Attorney General having proceeded against Mr. Hutchinson by way of criminal information, the jury disagreed, and Mr. Hutchinson was discharged; and (3) whether, considering that a number of business gentlemen living in Carrickfergus are fit and able to serve, if nominated, he will consider the desirability of relieving Captain Higginson of the costs and inconveniences of a fruitless prosecution?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: With the permission of my right hon. Friend I will reply to this Question. Captain Higginson's case comes on for trial at the end of this month. The first paragraph refers to matters in issue in the suit, and the last paragraph to its possible result; I must decline, therefore, to answer them. The facts as to Mr. Hutchinson's case are not accurately stated. One of the questions in issue in that case was as to the sufficiency of the lands owned by Mr. Hutchinson, and another question in issue was, who was to be the judge of that sufficiency, whether the Crown or the person required to serve? After the jury had disagreed Mr. Hutchinson pleaded guilty, and served as sheriff for the year 1894.

HORSE BREEDING (IRELAND).

COLONEL HUGH McCALMONT (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the evidence given recently in London before the Irish Horse Breeding Commission, the whole weight of which was against the introduction of Hackney blood into Ireland as being ruinous to it as a hunter producing or high class harness-horse country, the services of the Hackney stallions belonging to the Congested Districts Board will be withheld pending the finding of the Commission?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have referred this Question to the Congested Districts Board, but I hardly think it likely they will take any action pending the Report of the Commission.

PRISON WARDERS.

MR. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the recommendations made by the Prison Commissioners last year concerning the warders in prisons, to which he made reference on 10th August 1896 in a speech in this House, had received the assent of the Treasury; and whether he was in a position to hold out hope of some amelioration of their terms of superannuation?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, Sir; the Treasury declined to assent to the recommendations of the Commissioners. A further communication from the Commissioners is under consideration, but I cannot go so far as to hold out much hope of the improvement which the warders desire.

EDUCATION IN WALES (MORTMAIN ACTS).

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he is aware of the difficulties that have arisen, particularly of recent years, in Wales, in consequence of the liability of a gift of land as a site for a public school to be defeated by the death of the donor within 12 months after the execution of the deed of conveyance; and whether the Government will introduce a Measure enabling limited owners to make indefeasible gifts of real property for the purpose of education and recreation?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I am not aware that the provisions of the Mortmain Acts have given rise to any difficulty. In my opinion they are salutary provisions, and I do not think that any sufficient case is made out to justify an amendment of the law.

CARBIDE OF CALCIUM.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General if he was consulted by the Home Office before the Petroleum Acts, 1871 to 1881, were declared applicable to carbide of calcium; if so, was it on the ground that these Acts apply only to a liquid and not a solid that Section 7 of the Act of 1871 was declared non-applicable to carbide, and the public are forbidden to have the smallest quantity without licence of an admittedly non-inflammable solid; and what means exist for testing the legality of applying by Order in Council (published in *The Gazette* of 2nd March) Acts dealing with a particular liquid substance to a solid body not then in the contemplation of Parliament?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I must decline to answer the Question whether I was consulted by the Home Office, or the grounds of any opinion which I may have given, but I looked into the Act, and, assuming carbide of calcium to be of a like nature from the point of view of danger and liability to explosion, I am of opinion that an Order in Council may properly be made to apply the Petroleum Acts thereto. The legality of the Order can be raised in any proceedings taken to recover a penalty under the Act. The information in the possession of the Home Office, and the accidents which have occurred, do not support the view that the substance is non-inflammable solid. I may add that, the information given me at the Home Office with regard to the substance itself, and the accidents which happen, does not confirm the view suggested in the Question.

In answer to a further question by MR. T. M. HEALY,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said: I do not think that the Act does apply only to liquids.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that as soon as the Home Office Vote and the salary of the Attorney General come on, I shall raise this Question again.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND).

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that a Royal Commission in 1836 declared in favour of the view that Irish railways should be worked as one system and under one management; and whether, having regard to the multitude of railway systems and railway directors in Ireland, and the disastrous effect of high railway rates on an agricultural country, the Government will consider the advisability of asking for the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee to inquire whether the purchase and management of Irish railways by the State is desirable and practicable?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary requests me to say that the Government do not propose to appoint a further Royal Commission on the suggested State purchase of Irish railways. That principle was condemned by a Royal Commission appointed in 1865, and again by another Royal Commission appointed in 1886. The condition of affairs upon which those decisions were based does not seem subsequently to have been altered.

PRIME MINISTER (ABSENCE ABROAD).

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that the Prime Minister is also one of the principal Secretaries of State, and that the duties of any one of the five principal Secretaries of State can be constitutionally discharged by the other principal Secretaries of State, any arrangement, and, if so, what arrangement has been made, having regard to the critical aspect of foreign relations, for the discharge of duties relating to the department of Foreign Affairs heretofore discharged by Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office, in his absence from this country; on whom do the duties and responsibilities of Lord Salisbury, in his capacity of Prime Minister and chief of the Cabinet, devolve in his absence from this country; what is the nature of the responsibility of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having regard to the fact that he is not a Minister of the Crown?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: There is no change in the duties or responsibilities of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary at the present time—[*laughter*]—and, as regards the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, his position is precisely the same as that of all his predecessors in that office. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

MR. MACNEILL: Were all his predecessors Ministers of the Crown, or were they appointed by letter of the gentlemen who were Secretaries of State for the time? That is an easy Question. [*Laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: If the hon. Gentleman is making researches in constitutional law, I think he had better address his Question to the Attorney General. [*Ministerial laughter and cheers.*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EASTER HOLIDAYS).

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, for the convenience of Members, he can now state when it is proposed to adjourn for and reassemble after Easter?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I cannot now give a definite or final reply to this question; but my hope is that after a morning sitting on Tuesday week, the 13th, the House will adjourn for the Easter holidays. The precise length of the holidays is not finally settled; but I hope it will not be necessary to meet until the Monday following the Easter Monday.

MR. J. MORLEY: Do the Government intend to take the morning on the Tuesday for Government business?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: My present idea—but it is not a fixed one—is to have a morning sitting as usual, and that at that sitting nothing should be settled but the adjournment for the holidays, and the introduction by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary of the Bill relating to the Irish Agricultural Board.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How soon after the holidays will the Budget be taken?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Either on the Thursday after we meet or on the following Monday, I should think. But I am not sure.

MR. BRYCE: Do the Government intend to take the Employers' Liability Bill on this side of Easter or the other?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Probably not till after Easter.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If we forego an Irish Debate on the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair for the consideration of the Budget, or on the first Resolution when the Chairman is in the Chair, will the Government devote a reasonable amount of time on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill, or on some other stage, for the discussions of outstanding Irish questions?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I believe that it is on the Second Reading that the occasion would arise for continuing the discussion on which we have already spent some little Parliamentary time. The Government would have no desire unduly to curtail the Debate on that stage of the Bill; but I am unwilling to say that we would give a "reasonable" time until I know what the hon. and learned Member's view of a "reasonable" time is.

MR. CLANCY: When will the Bill dealing with the Board of Agriculture in Ireland be introduced?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am anxious to get the Bill printed, if possible, before Easter, in order that it may be discussed in Ireland during the Easter recess. It will be introduced on the Tuesday—the day on which the House adjourns for the holidays.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he was aware that in addition to the Irish question an intention existed to raise the important question of the general fiscal policy of the country on the Budget, and whether he would take care, in making arrangements for the Budget, that the latter question was not excluded?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do not think that, even if I had the desire, I should have the power to prevent discussion on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, when appointing the new Royal Commission on the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, the Government have any objection to the appointment, or intend to appoint on the Commission the Lord Chief Justice of England or Lord Morris, both of whom are eminent English Judges?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am not in a position at the present time to make any announcement as to the names to be proposed for the Commission to inquire into the financial relations.

PRIME MINISTER (ABSENCE ABROAD).

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL rose to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House in order to call attention to an urgent matter of definite public importance—namely, the absence from the United Kingdom of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—[*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—and his consequent inability to have personal communication with his colleagues in the Cabinet and to communicate intelligence to Parliament personally in the critical condition of the Eastern question, and as to the relations of this country with the foreign Powers.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen,

Mr. MACNEILL said he considered that the justification of his Motion had been amply vindicated by the tone and manner of the questions and the replies to those questions given this afternoon, both by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He hoped those Gentlemen, who were his opponents, would acquit him of anything like personal discourtesy—[*loud Ministerial cries of* "No!"]—to the head of the Government, but the issues here were issues of life and death, of peace and war. In the Act of Settlement under which Her Majesty sits on the Throne there was a provision giving to Parliament absolute control over the movements of the Sovereign in order to keep the Sovereign in the country. First of all, he submitted that his absence from the United Kingdom was in itself a disability for the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to have that personal communication with his colleagues which was all important in the present critical condition of affairs in the east of Europe, and the inconvenience and danger arising from Lord Salisbury's absence were much enhanced by the union in his person of the two great offices of State of Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. In the constitutional history of the country the Prime Minister was supposed to exercise a control over the Foreign Secretary. The union of the two offices in Lord Salisbury, and his absence abroad, left him with no outside influence to control his policy. When Lord Palmerston, in 1853, was dismissed from the office of Foreign Secretary it was because he did not obey the orders of the Prime Minister. Lord Salisbury's absence, he asserted, marked a development of one-man irresponsible power in the Cabinet. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] Never before had the two offices been united in one individual. Yet the Foreign Secretary had a power which was vested in no other Minister. The most petty gas or water Bill could be discussed line by line, and could not become law without an Act of Parliament, but what was the power of the Foreign Secretary? Treaties could be entered into, peace could be made, war declared, the most tremendous issue could be decided without the House of Commons having the slightest control over them in their initiation. This country could, so far as Parliament was concerned, be placed at the very tail of Germany, or made subservient to Turkey. It might be said that the Under Secretary was here to give full information. In the strongest manner consistently with Parliamentary courtesy he traversed that statement. Full information was not given by the right hon. Gentleman. He could not really be the personal agent or mouthpiece of the Secretary of State when the latter was out of the kingdom. There ought to be in the House of Commons a statesman constitutionally responsible—

*Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. Member could not enter into that question.

Mr. MACNEILL denied that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs was a Minister of the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman was no more responsible for any of the questions that he answered than the humblest Member of the House; and it was imperative, having regard to the state of Europe, to the condition of affairs in Crete, that there should be some Minister present on whom they could fix responsibility. He thought that the tone of the answers given showed clearly the absence of that responsibility and a desire not to give the House information. There should, in short, be someone responsible to the true Parliament of the country for the management of foreign affairs.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn," put and negatived, amid derisive Ministerial laughter.

MOTION.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.

Bill to remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to officers on his establishment, ordered to be brought in by Lord George Hamilton and Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 182.]

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Read the Third time, and passed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [5th February], "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words:—

"this House declines to Read a Second time a Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Public Health in Scotland which does not provide for the rates under the same being levied one-half upon the owners and the other half upon the occupiers of land in burghs as in counties; and which does not permit of the acquisition of land compulsorily for Public Health purposes by an Order of the Local Government Board of Scotland without resort to Parliament."—*(Mr. Caldwell.)*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Question put, and agreed to.

On the Question, "That the Bill be Read a Second time,"

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked why the Bill did not consolidate all the law relating to public health in Scotland. It consolidated, nearly all the law, but the provisions of the Act of 1891 were left out. It would be obviously for the great convenience of those who had to refer to the Bill that there should be a complete consolidation, and that no part of the provisions regarding public health should be left out.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) said the Bill might more properly be discussed in Committee than in the House, but he desired to raise the question how far it ought to apply to burghs as well as to counties, and what the effect would be of the provisions of the Bill which were applied to burghs as well as to counties. It had been the view of many persons that it would be more convenient to have a separate measure of public health for burghs and counties. It was clear, however, that those who represented burghs would not wish to put any obstacle in the way of the Bill passing, and it was desired to have the benefit of the Bill for burghs and not to delay it by raising any difficulty on the point in the passing of this Bill. There was one difficulty in regard to the application of the Bill to burghs, which was raised in the Memorandum of the burgh officials. He should like to know whether the Lord Advocate was prepared to give his attention to that Memorandum, and whether in Committee they might have the satisfaction of hearing the Lord Advocate on that point. Would the Lord Advocate give his consideration to the question of overlapping in the provisions of the Bill with the provisions of the Burgh Police Act, and the question how far the Act of 1867 applied? In the case of sewers and water the provisions of the Bill would overlap in the burghs the provisions of the Act of 1892; and if the matter was not put into much clearer and more specific form than at present in the Bill, there would be a great deal of confusion and complication in the future.

*__The LORD ADVOCATE__ (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire) said that when the discussion took place the other day several hon. Members complained that he had not introduced the Bill by a preliminary statement to explain what was exactly being done. He thought perhaps the best justification of what he did was to be found in the Debate which ensued. He thought that a Minister in charge of a Bill who had the advantage of the courtesy of the House in being allowed to choose his own time to speak, was bound not to trouble the House unless he had something to say. It would have been surplusage on his part if he had prefaced this Bill with any long statement, because everything he could have said was said in the Memorandum prefixed to the Bill. As to the material with which the House had to deal, it was clearly explained in the Memorandum prefixed to the Bill, and hon. Members would find in the Bill itself that there was a marginal note opposite each clause showing the source whence it was derived and how far the old legislation of 1867 had been altered and departed from. As to the reasons why the Government had adopted this or that in the Bill, he thought the hon. Member forgot that the Bill had been discussed at considerable length last year in another place, and that it represented therefore the outcome of very careful consideration before a very competent Committee. He could not doubt therefore that hon. Members would think that the Government had acted wisely in beginning at least with the Public Health Bill as it left the House of Lords last year. The only alteration they had made had cropped up in one or two matters which had occurred in the meantime, like the scandal connected with the interment of a body in Aberdeen. The Government had tried to meet that case; but there was no alteration in the principle of the Bill as it left the House of Lords. In the discussions there were no Second Reading considerations advanced at all. The hon. Member for Banffshire made a speech, not on the Bill before the House, but on a Bill of some years ago, on a matter outside the scope of public health, which was introduced by Mr. Seymour Keay. The hon. Member for Dundee drew special attention to Clause 57, with the object of calling attention to the position in which Dundee was at present with regard to a private Bill which was at present before a Committee upstairs. The hon. Baronet rather indicated in the discussion which arose on this Bill that the Lord Advocate constituted himself responsible for the counties as against the burghs. He disclaimed any such intention. The view of the Government as to Dundee was that it ought not to be allowed in a controversial question to go ahead of the general law. He assured the Member for Dundee that the Government had a perfectly open mind with regard to the clause in question, and they were perfectly willing and anxious that it should be fully discussed when the Bill was sent to Committee. The points raised by the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. Caldwell) also were each and all strictly Committee points. He called attention to the question of a special drainage district. On that he would only say this, that no doubt there was in the Bill a distinction made between burghs and counties. There was at least a reason for that distinction, for, although it was quite right that, if a special drainage scheme was inaugurated in a part of a burgh, the inhabitants in that part should not be called upon to pay for drainage elsewhere, yet that would not be always just in the counties, because a part of a county might be constituted into a special drainage district, and then, by executing some minute works at very small cost, might obtain exemption from the burden in the other parts of the county towards which they ought to contribute. But upon that point, as upon others, the Government had not absolutely made up its mind, and would be very glad to listen to any representations and arguments in Committee. With regard to recreation grounds, the hon. Member forgot that since the passing of the Public Health Act of 1867 there had been a Public Parks Act, and the provisions of that Statute really gave him what he wanted, and it would be unnecessary to go any further in a Bill of this sort. The hon. Member also reverted to the matter of the Standing Joint Committee. Well, the Government did not think it advisable to disturb the settlement made in the Act of 1889, but all these points were Committee points, and not proper subjects for Second Reading discussion. [*Cheers.*] The only other point was that on which the hon. Member founded his Amendment, which had been put and negatived. He (the Lord Advocate) did not wish to take advantage of that fact, and, in courtesy to the hon. Member, he would say a few words on the subject. It raised the question of rating. In burghs, the option was given to rate either upon the occupier or the owner and the occupier. Again, he must disclaim any intention to stop discussion on that subject in the proper place—the Committee. The hon. Member made a slight slip in stating what the law was, for he said there could be no levying in a burgh half upon the owner and half upon the occupier, unless there was *de facto* a prison assessment. He could not but think that the hon. Member had not had his attention called to the 63rd section of the Prisons Act of 1877. That Act abolished prison assessment altogether, because it put the maintenance of the prisons on the State Imperial funds. But in Section 63 there was a general provision which said that in any Act of Parliament where an assessment might be levied in the manner of the prison assessment, then it should be legal for the assessing body, whoever they were, to put that assessment half upon the owner and half upon the occupier.

MR. CALDWELL: I said so.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE replied that he did not think so, for the hon. Member said that it had been decided by the Court of Session that they could not put the assessment half on the owner and half on the occupier.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The question of the division of rates has been disposed of by the decision of the House on the Amendment, and that cannot be discussed again.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said he was sorry that he had digressed, although he might say he had done so knowingly, because he had not wished to take advantage of the hon. Member in the matter, and had wished to show the hon. Member how the matter stood. The only other Members who spoke were the Member for the Blackfriars Division (Mr. Provand), who echoed what was said by the Member for Lanark, and the Member for Mid Lothian (Sir T. G. Carmichael), whose remarks were of that discursive and complimentary character that they called for acknowledgment rather than reply. Accordingly, he had practically nothing more to say on the Second Reading. The question on the Second Reading was, shall we have an Amendment of the Public Health Law of Scotland? They were all agreed on that, and he could assure hon. Gentlemen that the Government should certainly consider the details, as far as they related to public health, as matters of no party moment at all. But they would try to hold an even hand between what sometimes might be the conflicting interests of counties and burghs, and the Member for Partick (Mr. Parker Smith) might rest assured that careful consideration would be given to the memorial to which the hon. Member had referred. He hoped the House would now allow the Bill to go to a Second Reading. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said he was sure that no one wished to stand between the House and the Second Reading, because he thought the Bill was one which would be very beneficial to Scotland. The provisions of the existing Act were somewhat antiquated in many respects, and he was glad to observe that in this Bill advantage had been taken of the various legislative Measures which had since been passed into law. It was true that this was a Bill rather of detail than of principle, and therefore anything like prolonged Second Reading discussion would be both unnecessary and inappropriate. [*Cheers.*] At the same time, he hoped his right hon. and learned Friend would not object to what had been done by his hon. Friends who spoke the other night, because it was quite usual, even on such a Bill as this, to call attention to some of the more salient and important points, and he did not understand that anything more was intended by his hon. Friends. [*Opposition cheers.*] His own object in rising was to ask one or two questions. The Lord Advocate did not propose to repeal the Amending Act of 1891, but he (Mr. Balfour) was sure that his right hon. Friend must know that some difficulty had been experienced in working the provisions of the Act of 1891 along with the provisions of the other Statutes relative to public health. There had come under his own cognisance cases in which it was by no means easy to work in the provisions of that Act with the other statutory provisions dealing with the same subject. He would, therefore, suggest to the right hon. Gentleman, as a matter for consideration in Committee, whether it might not be more convenient to amalgamate the provisions of the Act of 1891 with those of this Bill. Reference had been made by the Member for Partick to a memorial from the burgh officials. There was a great deal in that Memorandum that was well worthy of consideration. ["Hear, hear!"] He would not say that he would go the length of having two separate codes—one for the county and one for the burghs—but they should see that there was nothing in this Bill which would stop the power to assess for works done under the Act of 1867, and that there should not be anything like overlapping of powers, because no doubt there had been some difficulty in that respect; but that was a matter for Committee also. ["Hear, hear!"] The Amendment of the Member for Lanark being rejected, a discussion on the subject of rating would be inappropriate, therefore he would merely put it to his right hon. Friend whether the question of dividing the rate in burghs was not very well worthy of consideration. [*Opposition cheers.*] The whole tendency, not only of recent legislation, but legislation in Scotland for a very considerable time, had been in that direction, as in the case of the Roads and Bridges Act, the School Acts, County Council Act, and Parish Council Act, and all the assessments in counties under this Bill would practically be so divided. There was a proposal in the Bill which seemed to him a very good one. It was that the Roads and Bridges Act should be the standard, instead of the poor-rate standard, and the question would seem to be whether there was any sufficient reason for not extending that principle, which was practically made universal in counties, to burghs also. The assessing power was very considerably increased by this Bill, and that was quite right, because the necessities that had to be provided for had increased. Under the Act of 1867 the rate was limited to 3d., and in the Act of 1891 to 6d. It might hardly be worth while to have division of rates for very small sums like that; but when a shilling rate was assessed for the same purposes, it might well become a matter for consideration. ["Hear, hear!"] He also ventured to point out that some of the improvements on which the larger rate would be leviable would tend, he thought, to enhance the value of property. If that were so, it seemed to be an additional reason for, at all events, giving very careful consideration to the question of whether the whole rate should not be symmetrically divided. He also desired to press on the consideration of his right hon. Friend the question of whether the provisions for the taking of land for public purposes under this Bill were not too complicated. The most recent provisions dealing with this matter were all in the direction of simplification. This was the case in the Burgh and Police Act of some four or five years ago, the Parish Councils Act of 1894, and in other Acts. No one would wish property to be taken without giving fair compensation, and the safeguards in these various Acts seemed amply sufficient for the purpose. The long and tedious and extremely complicated provisions in the present Bill, however, would render the acquisition of land for public purposes practically prohibitory.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said he should be very sorry to do anything to impede the Second Reading of this Bill, which certainly was a step in the right direction. He regretted to see, however, that the Lord Advocate proposed to refer the Bill to the Standing Committee on Law. He would ask him to reconsider his decision in that matter.

*MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that this was not the time for discussing that question.

SIR C. CAMERON said he only wished to point out that, if the course proposed by the Lord Advocate was persisted in, a very large number of hon. Members for Scotland would have no opportunity whatever of taking part in the Committee discussions.

Bill read a Second time.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE moved "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc."

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) moved, as an Amendment, to leave out the words, "the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.," in order to add instead thereof the words

> "a Committee consisting of all the Members representing Scottish constituencies, together with Fifteen other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection."

This Bill, he said, affected in the most minute and complicated way every constituency in Scotland, and therefore he held that every Member for every constituency in Scotland had a right to express his opinions in Committee upon the details of the Bill. He said it was right and proper that this Bill should not be discussed at any very great length on the Second Reading, because he thought they were all agreed on the general principle. They all admitted that a Bill of this kind was very much needed, and he thought they might congratulate the Lord Advocate and the Government on having brought it in. But if this Bill was approved in general principle it was essentially a Bill of detail which must be carefully and anxiously examined, either in Committee or otherwise. Every Scotch Member should have the right to criticise this Bill in detail. That might be done in Committee of the whole House; but the Bill was, in his opinion, far too technical in its character to be argued in that way. Another course was that proposed by the Lord Advocate, but he would point out that as at present constituted there were only eight Scotch Members of the Standing Committee on Law, and even with the 15 added afterwards by the Committee of Selection there would be only 23 Scotch Members out of 72. Therefore, it was quite plain that a great many Members, perhaps those most deeply interested in this question, and those who had the right to discuss it, would be excluded from any opportunity of doing so. He thought the consideration of a Bill of this kind—long, elaborate, and bristling with intricate and difficult details—would be a great undertaking for the Standing Committee on Law. No time would be saved by the adoption of this course, because the 55 or 56 Members who had been excluded from the Committee's deliberations would naturally feel it their duty, in the interests of their constituents, to renew the discussions at great length when the Bill came downstairs again. Then there was the proposal which he made in the Amendment he had moved. There were several reasons in favour of that course. The first was the great and admitted success of the two cases in which they had had this Grand Scotch Committee working upstairs. Another argument was that this Bill affected, in the most minute and complicated way, every constituency in Scotland; and therefore, he claimed that every Member for every constituency in Scotland had the right to express his opinion upon it. It was necessary to watch Bills of this class very carefully in Committee, with complete and intimate local knowledge. It was unnecessary for him to use many arguments in favour of the principle for which he was now contending, namely, that Scotch Members should be given a small Measure of Home Rule in the shape of a Committee upstairs, where they could Debate deliberately and harmoniously the principles and practices which they themselves understood. He remembered how useful on a previous occasion the 15 added Members were. Those Gentlemen gave the Scotch Members the benefit of their experience, but he thought they in return were benefited by witnessing the practical and admirable way in which Scotchmen could do their business when they did it in their own fashion. Perhaps it would have been better if he had moved that a Scotch Grand Committee should be established, to which all Scotch Bills should be referred, but he thought that the Select Committee he suggested was sufficient for the purpose of considering this one particular and individual Measure. He could hardly believe it would be contended there would be a majority of Scotch Members hostile to the Government. That might be so, but he thought he was justified in saying that none of his colleagues would desire to Debate a Bill of this kind from a Party standpoint. But if the argument he had mentioned were used he would be quite willing that the whole of the 15 added Members should be Tories, so that the Government should have the majority. He wanted to make this a good Bill, and in order to give every Scotch Member an opportunity of debating it, he moved the Amendment which stood in his name.

Mr. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said he had always made it a point not to do anything to unnecessarily delay the progress of business. Because he agreed with the principle of the Bill, he abstained from saying anything on the Second Reading. How had his virtue been rewarded? That in all probability he would have no opportunity whatever of discussing some important details of the Bill in which his constituents were interested. When they were treated thus by the Government it was rather apt to upset one's ideas of being virtuous in his conduct in the House. He had been told by Members older than himself that they could not get anything unless they could show that they kept business back. The proposal of the Lord Advocate was to submit this Measure to the Grand Committee on Law. That Committee consisted of 68 Members, eight of whom were Scotchmen. He did not wish to say anything disparaging of the 60 English Members, but was it possible for them to grasp with ease the intricate details of a Scotch Bill, which taxed all the abilities of Scotch representatives. His hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire had suggested that the Bill would come before the House again on Report. But even then, there would not be an opportunity of discussing some important details of the Bill. One question which greatly interested the people of Scotland was that of rating. He understood that under the Rules of the House the question of rating could not be brought up on Report. For these reasons he heartily supported the Amendment.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said he was unable to accept the Amendment, and he could not help thinking that his hon. Friend had proposed it under a misapprehension of what was and what was not possible according to the forms of the House. The Amendment was to send the Bill to a Committee consisting of Scotch Members, with 15 Members added. The hon. Member admitted that this was a Measure of such complicated details that it was quite unfitted for consideration by a Committee of the whole House. But the course which he proposed would send the Bill to a Committee of the whole House. He asked, as a point of order, whether it was possible under this Motion to set up a Scotch Standing Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Committee proposed by the Amendment is a Select Committee.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said it was a matter of elementary knowledge that when a Bill went to a Select Committee it came back to the Committee of the whole House. Therefore, was it a practical proposal that the Bill should be first sent to a Committee composed of the Scotch Members with fifteen Members added, and then come back to the Committee of the whole House? There was no such thing in existence as a Scotch Grand Committee. In 1894 a Scotch Grand Committee was set up and the Bill which was referred to it was exempted from the Committee stage of the House. That was not possible in this case. There was a good precedent for sending this Bill to the Grand Committee in Law. He had been a member of that Committee for some years, and he well remembered that the Irish Public Health Bill was most satisfactorily discussed by that Committee, as he had no doubt this Bill would be. No doubt the Committee of Selection would take care that the added Members were nearly all, if not all, Scotchmen. As to the question of rating, if the hon. Member for Kincardineshire was not one of the added Members, and if the Grand Committee on Law did not settle the question of rating in a way which commended itself to him, he could move that the Bill be recommitted, and thus again raise the point. For these reasons he could not see his way to agree to the Amendment.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said that Lord Advocate Macdonald proposed, in regard to the Burgh Police Bill, a very sensible plan, which was covered by this very Amendment.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: Lord Advocate Macdonald made that proposition in 1886, and the Burgh Police Bill passed in 1892. We want this to pass speedily.

MR. CALDWELL said that the Bill which was passed into law was really the Bill which was passed by a Select Committee of the House. That Bill was passed through the House after one day's discussion, and remitted to a Select Committee consisting of all the Scotch Members. At least, every Scotch Member who desired was on that Committee. The Bill was carefully considered by the Select Committee. It was a good many days in Committee, and it was discussed in a manner that gave satisfaction to the Scotch Members on both sides. It was not passed; but the reason was, that the House was going in the next Session to engage in dealing with local government, and they therefore considered it undesirable to deal with a Bill which might be modified in the following Session. In 1892 a Bill was brought in which was practically accepted by all the Scotch Members. It was all very well to say that if this Bill was committed to a Select Committee it would still have to pass through the Committee of the House. They had had a Bill to-day the size of this, and what was the result? Because they gave a fair opportunity to every Scotch Member the Scotch Members accepted it, and the Bill passed through Committee and the Report stage in one sitting. That would be the result probably if this Bill were sent to a Select Committee. Every Scotch Member would know that he had the opportunity of being heard, but if the Bill was sent to the Standing Committee they would have a vast majority of English Members on it. Fifteen other Members would be added, and Members from the other side, and six Members from that side, of whom two must be Irish Members. [*Cries of* "No!"] Oh, yes. He had no doubt the Irish Members would insist on their rights. He had never known them not to claim their rights. [*Laughter.*] Thus they would have a Bill which only concerned Scotland dealt with by a Committee the great majority of which would be English and Irish Members. Was that fair, that the Scotch Members should practically have no voice in the matter? The Government might drive the Bill to the Standing Committee, but they would find it a different thing to pass it into law after. If the Bill were forced in that way he wished the Lord Advocate much joy when he came to the Report stage on a Bill with 175 clauses. But did they think they could drive a Bill like this through, in opposition to the wishes of the people of Scotland? Hon. Members were treating this as a Home Rule matter, but there was no Home Rule about it. There was nothing for the Government to be afraid of. There was no party advantage with the matter at all. It was simply whether the Scotch Members were to be given a hearing on a Bill dealing with the public health of Scotland. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir WILLIAM PRIESTLEY (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities) said there were two or three points to be kept in view in reference to this Committee. In the first place, it should not be on party lines; in the second place, the Committee should not be too large; and lastly, it should comprise those who knew something of the subject. If such men as his hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeen, or his hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, who were conversant with matters concerning health were likely to be excluded, there might be some ground for this contention of his hon. Friend opposite, but he thought the Committee of Selection might be trusted to nominate suitable Members, and the House would do well, therefore, to accept the proposal of the Lord Advocate.

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said the hon. Member had laid down one or two rules for their guidance. First, the Committee was not to be too large; but he did not seem to be aware that the Committee suggested by his hon. Friend would not be so large as the Committee suggested by the Lord Advocate. Then he said they should take care that the Committee comprised those who knew something of the subject; but this Bill affected not merely technical experts, but the great mass of the people. While he should be glad to see the hon. Member on the Committee, he had a certain suspicion of technical information. For these reasons they wished to see the Bill in one form or other referred to a Committee upon which every Scotch Member would have an opportunity of expressing his opinion. There was nothing he and his Friends desired but to see the Bill pass into law, and, further, they wished to see it passed improved. This being a matter which went home to the daily interest, health, and comfort of the people at large, it was eminently a question which ought not to be dealt with by a restricted number of the representatives of Scotland. He did not know that 15 Members, as proposed by his hon. Friend, was precisely the number that should be added. When on a previous occasion a Bill of this character was referred with great advantage to a Committee of all the Scotch Members, the House added such a number of Members as made the Committee a reflex of the distribution of parties in the House, and whatever number was added now it would certainly not be more than 15, because the Scotch Members were now more equally divided in politics. ["Hear, hear!"] The principal precedent was the Bill for the establishment of Parish Councils. That was generally considered a non-contentious Bill, though he admitted there were many points in that Bill which closely approached a political character; but every point in connection with that Bill was discussed with the greatest desire to avoid political differences, and the divisions on Amendments did not follow party lines, but represented the honest opinions of individual Members. [*Ministerial laughter.*] The crack of the party whip was not heard, and the result was an harmonious settlement of a great and difficult question. ["Hear, hear!"] This Bill was far more completely exempt from anything like a suspicion of party feeling. What in the world could politics have to do with contagious diseases, public nuisances, and questions of that kind? ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore, he would have thought this was an occasion when they might freely adopt the precedent established in the last Parliament. The Lord Advocate had taken the point, which he thought was little more than a formal one, that on the former occasion a special Grand Committee was set up. It was true that such a reference as his hon. Friend advocated did not supersede the consideration of the Bill in Committee of the whole House; but did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that when all the Scotch Members had spent days and perhaps weeks, over the details of the Bill, there would be any or much discussion in Committee of the whole House? In such circumstances that stage would be little more than a matter of form. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that that monument of legal ingenuity, the Burgh Police Act, passed the House with the greatest ease, although it had to encounter the full danger of the Committee stage; and the same thing would happen to this Bill if the course proposed by his hon. Friend were adopted. ["Hear, hear!"] Seeing that there was only this one Bill relating to Scotland before the House this year, he did not see that there would be much advantage in setting up a special Grand Committee. The Government would gain in more ways than one by adopting his hon. Friend's suggestion. In the first place, it was only just and right that the representatives of the people of Scotland should have ample opportunity of making the Bill conform to their views and needs, and in the second place, the time of the Government would be saved; for if the Bill was not referred to a Committee in which all the Scotch Members would have an opportunity of bringing their views to bear, the right hon. Gentleman might be perfectly certain that on the Report stage a good many Members would have a good deal to say. He did not propose to open the question of referring a Bill which could rightly be called political or contentious to a Committee of this sort; but in the case of a Bill such as this, which was of a purely non-contentious character, it would be a great advantage to adopt the course proposed. He regretted that the Lord Advocate had refused to consider this proposal. If the Government had their way the Bill would go to the Standing Committee on Law, on which very few Scotch Members could sit, and all the other Scotch Members would be excluded from all power of taking part in its discussion. Therefore not only would the Bill be subjected to the danger of elaborate discussion in the House—and a discussion not nearly so effectual as that which would take place in Committee—but there would also remain among those affected by the Bill a feeling of regret and disappointment, because their interests had not been considered. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. T. F. HALSEY (Herts, Watford) said that in plain English this was a proposal to revise the Grand Committee established in the last Parliament after many days of contentious debate. As he was, perhaps, in the absence of his right hon. Friend the Member for Oxford University, the oldest Member of the Committee of Selection, he would like to say a word on the subject. The Committee of Selection were, of course, ready to discharge to the best of their ability every duty the House placed upon them, and he ventured to think that up to the present they had discharged their duties to the satisfaction of the House—["hear, hear!"]—but at the same time he thought they had a right to ask that if this Motion was carried they should have some more definite instructions from the House as to the course to be adopted. They endeavoured to make these two Grand Committees microcosms of the House, so that the exact condition of Parties might be reflected in them. But they could not make a Grand Committee consisting of all the Scotch Members with 15 others a microcosm of the House. The only way would be to select the whole of those 15 Members from one side of the House, but that would be a very invidious thing to do. The matter would be further complicated because, if they were to pursue that course, the Irish question in regard to such matters would at once be raised. It appeared to him that there was hardly any necessity at all for this Motion. He could assure his hon. Friend the Member for Kincardineshire that if the Motion were not carried he would not be shut out, for he would be one of the first Members to be selected as an expert. The practice of the Committee of Selection in regard to Select Committees had been to select any Members whose names were on the back of the Bill to be considered, who showed any interest in the question by having taken part in the Debates, or who were acquainted with the subject, without reference to the side of the House on which they sat. He ventured to think the House would do well to refer this Bill in the usual manner to the Grand Committee on Law, but if the House should decide to accept the Motion of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire he urged, on behalf of the Committee of Selection, that they should give some definite instructions to the Committee of Selection as to the principles on which they should go in choosing the proposed 15 Members.

Mr. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL (Fife, W.) said the only reason he rose to take part in the Debate was in order to curry favour with the Committee of Selection. [*Laughter.*] It seemed that no Scotch Member had got the least chance of being put upon this Select Committee unless he took part in the Debates.

Mr. HALSEY said the hon. Member was entirely mistaken, and he could venture to promise the hon. Member that in all probability he would be put on the Committee.

Mr. BIRRELL said that in that case he had already acomplished what he had had in view. [*Laughter.*] He congratulated the Committee of Selection for the intelligence they displayed in discharging a solemn public function. He thought that Scotchmen would prefer that questions of this kind should be submitted to all the Scotch Members—["hear, hear!"]—instead of their being dealt with in the random, sporadic, and very childish mode which had been described by the hon. Member. He must say he was utterly surprised at the course taken by the Lord Advocate. A number of them had, in the innocence of their hearts, entered into obligations to County Councils, medical authorities, and other persons interested in their constituencies, to put down and support Amendments when this subject came into Committee, and they had been conjured by them not in any way to delay the Second Reading of this great Bill, in order that at the earliest moment it might come under the discussion of all the persons interested. Now they found that there would not be that opportunity for discussing the matter which they had expected. The Bill was to be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, which was a more unwieldly body than would be a Select Committee composed of all the Scotch Members. This Bill had undergone every fortune possible to a Bill except that of being passed, and had been mentioned, he believed, in 11 Queen's Speeches. Now that they had a good opportunity of putting on the Statute-book this Session a Bill which Scotland had for years demanded, their hopes were in a fair way of being frustrated by the action of the executive officer in charge of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said he had been a Member of the Committee on the Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill, and he knew that on that Committee the English Members had to coach themselves up in the very difficult questions they had to consider, which it was difficult for an Englishman to grasp. He did not think that during the two or three years that that Bill was in Committee they had any Party votes. He ventured to urge on the Lord Advocate that it would be desirable to send the present Bill to a Committee composed of Scotchmen, instead of to the Grand Committee on Law.

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said they were much indebted to the hon. Member for the support which he had given them, especially as the hon. Member had had experience of the working of a similar Committee to that which the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire wished to set up. This Motion proposed to set up a Committee upon which all Scotch Members would have seats, with the addition of 15 Members of other nationalities. The great merit of such a proposal was that it secured that the Bill would be considered by those who knew about it, and those who cared about it, and it would be a far more competent body to deal with the Measure than the Grand Committee on Law. They had heard about the non-Party character of that body, with which they all agreed. They were all agreed also that the Bill was not a Bill of principles but a Bill of details. The great point, however, was that the Committee which was to consider this Bill should be composed of Members who knew something about the Bill, and who were interested in the Bill; and he denied that the Grand Committee on Law, even with the addition of 15 Members, whom he supposed would be all Scotch Members, could be described as a body of that character. The Grand Committee on Law consisted of 68 members, eight of whom were Scotch Members. Who were those eight? Mr. Asquith, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Sir Robert Finlay, Mr. Haldane, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Graham Murray, Sir Robert Reid, and Mr. Parker Smith. Those were amongst the ablest of the Scotch Members; but it would be observed that six out of the eight sat on the two Front Benches; and he might be permitted to say that his hon. Friends the Members for Haddington (Mr. Haldane) and Partick (Mr. Parker Smith) were also distinguished in having Front Bench minds. [*Laughter.*] Did those eight Members at all fairly represent the character of the Scotch Members of the House? Or could even the addition of 15 other Scotch Members so dilute the Scotch contingent on the Committee as to make it a fair representation of the Scotch representation in the House? They would only have 23 Scotch Members out of 83, or only a quarter of the Scotch Members on the Committee, and they could not expect that the consideration of the details of the Bill, affecting town and country alike, by such a Committee would give satisfaction. He would earnestly urge upon the Government, if they wanted the Bill to be a satisfactory piece of legislation and to bring Scotch public health legislation up to a proper standard, to send the Bill for consideration to Members who cared about it, and who knew about it, and thus have at least one piece of legislation that would give some satisfaction to the people of Scotland.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) said the most important point at issue in the formation of those Committees was the point that they ought to be a microcosm of the House at large. It was for that point they fought most bitterly in the last Parliament, with the result that 15 Members were added to the Grand Committee on Law, so as to make it as representative as possible of the House of Commons. He contended that the Committee now proposed to be appointed would not be a microcosm of the House; and while, no doubt, the main points of the Bill would be divided on on non-Party lines, no Minister would care to accept the responsibility of steering the Bill through Committee unless he had a majority on whom he could rely on a pinch. There was a question as to how many Scotch Members would appear on the Grand Committee on Law. There were in the first place eight Scotch Members on the Committee, and in the next place there were 15 to be added to it, who probably would all be Scotch Members. But there was a further possibility. It was a common thing for an hon. Gentleman who was interested in a particular Bill before a Standing Committee to effect an exchange with a friend who was a member of the Committee and had a seat on the same side of the House, and he did not think in the case of this Bill Scotch Members would have much difficulty in finding English friends who would be glad to give their places on the Committee to them. When the question of setting up a satisfactory Scotch Standing Committee was discussed before it was suggested that there should be a Committee, limiting it to a fixed number, say 80, laying down, as the first principle that it should be a microcosm of the House, and that, subject to that principle, as many Scotch Members as possible were to be added to it. If there were a Committee of 80 it would not be possible to put on all the Scotch Members and keep the Committee a microcosm of the House; But they could certainly put on all the Scotch Members on the other side who wished to take part in the discussion on the Bill, and still keep the Committee a microcosm of the House. Why should all Scotch Members be included on the Committee? What share would the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs take in the discussion of the Scotch Public Health Bill?

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said that for about ten years he had been trying to get some Scotch Committee appointed to which all Bills relating to Scotland might be referred. The present was a much more limited and moderate proposal. The case which had arisen was one of the extreme examples of the absurdity of the present practice of the House. This Bill was admittedly uncontroversial; there was no Party capital to be made out of it; it was exceptionally important to Scotland; it did not affect any other part of the United Kingdom; it was necessarily unintelligible to Englishmen; and there were a large number of Scotch Members eminently qualified and anxious to deal with the Measure. Yet the Government refused to submit the Bill to the willing Members, and sent it to a high and dry Standing Committee on Law, on which there were only eight Scotch Members, and to which only 15 more could be added. This was simply a result of the prejudices of the House springing from the recent Home Rule controversy. The Lord Advocate had correctly pointed out that if this Bill were sent to a Committee of Scotch Members it would have to come back to the House as from a Select Committee. But that would be no obstacle to the passage of the Bill. If the Scotch Members had a fair chance of putting their views before the Committee, the Government would have no further trouble. Scotch Members did not obstruct Scotch Bills; and there was not a Scotch Member on the Opposition side of the House who did not wish the Bill to pass into law. ["Hear, hear!"] But he objected altogether to the Bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Law with only 23 Scotch Members out of 62, and he should divide the House on that point. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said that in the course of the consideration of this Bill, subjects leading to considerable contention might be introduced, and it was essential that the Government should have upon the Committee the full majority to which they were entitled. As to referring the Bill to the Standing Committee on Law, he approved of the proposal. It was desirable, not only to have Members qualified by technical knowledge on the Committee, but also Members of legal experience, who could advise the Committee on questions of the administration of the Public Health Acts of 1875 and 1891. Ominous threats had been uttered by hon. Gentlemen opposite as to what would happen when the Bill came back from the Committee; but he believed that the common sense which predominated among Scotch Members dealing with Scotch legislation would prevail in this case. As all Scotch Members were anxious to have the Bill, he believed that they would agree to help its progress.

MR. J. G. HOLBURN (Lanark, N.W.) said that the assistance not only of legal experts, but also of those who had practical experience of the administration of the Public Health Acts, would be necessary in discussing this Bill. He hoped that nothing would be done by any Scotch Member to endanger the passing of the Bill, but that the opportunity of putting the Public Health Law of Scotland on a sound and satisfactory basis would be seized. It was essential, however, that every Scotch Member should have a chance of considering the Bill in Committee. Even those Members who had no special knowledge of their own would be able to contribute to the discussion the suggestions of their localities in regard to the particular points on which those localities had found difficulty. He himself had a strong desire to be on the Committee to which the Bill was to be referred; because he had had many years' experience as the Convener of a Public Health Committee. He knew the difficulties which beset localities under the present law. He hoped this Measure would not be considered in any Party spirit by the Scotch Members; and that they would put the Public Health of their country before any consideration of Party advantage.

MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said he was conscious of the temerity of an Englishman intruding in this Debate. But one or two references had been made to the conduct of a similar discussion a few years ago, and he ventured on that account to intrude. His hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeen said he had recanted from the position he took up in 1894. He believed his hon. Friend was under a mistake. The position he took up in 1894 was this. Sir George Trevelyan proposed to set up a Standing Scottish Committee composed of all the Scotch Members. He himself ventured to insist, following the lead of the present Leader of the House, on the prime necessity for making every Standing Committee a reflection of the balance of Parties in the House. It would be impossible to conduct business on any other arrangement than that. He said in 1894 that if they made their Grand Committees correspond with the balance of Parties in the House, then he should be quite ready to consent to putting on the Committee as many Scotch Members as could be put upon it. But when a change was made in 1894 in the direction he indicated, in the composition of the Committee, he at once ceased his opposition. That was not a recantation. In considering the proposal now before them they must remember it would be a precedent. They could not with reference to one section of the House adopt a precedent which they were not prepared to follow with respect to other sections. But if they adopted the principle of making the Grand Committee correspond to the balance of Parties in the House, then they could freely go on with that principle in reference to other parts of the kingdom. They had had no expression of opinion from the Government on the real merits of the controversy. As the Lord Advocate had said, if they referred the Bill to a Select Committee as proposed, the Bill would come back to be considered again in Committee of the whole House. But if they referred the Bill to a Standing Committee, they would be saved from the consideration of it in Committee of the whole House. If they had a Standing Committee of 81 Members, and if the Committee were divided according to the balance of Parties, they would have 54 Members from the Government side and 27 from the Opposition side. The latter might be all Scotch Members, while the 54 would include almost every Scotch Member, and would still leave a balance of legal and expert persons sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the hon. Member for Renfrew and also the desires of the Scotch Members opposite. Not everyone desired to be on the Committee, and among the number he believed the hon. Member for West Fife.

MR. BIRRELL: I did not express any opinion at all. I rose in order to ingratiate myself with the Committee. [*Laughter.*]

MR. COURTNEY: I understood my hon. Friend rose to ingratiate himself so that they should not choose him. [*Laughter.*]

MR. BIRRELL: If you so understood, you quite misconceived my sense of public duty. [*Renewed laughter.*]

MR. COURTNEY, resuming, said that, at any rate, there were Scotch Members who did not desire to be on the Committee. He suspected his right hon. Friend the Member for Montrose was one of them. [Several HON. MEMBERS: "He is one now."] He was not on the Committee he himself had in contemplation. This was not a Party matter, and they might come to an agreement. He appealed to the Leader of the House not to shut the door to an agreement. It was of the greatest possible importance in respect of the conduct of affairs in the House that they should be able to organise Grand Committees which would satisfactorily take business from the House itself, and if they could do that with respect to local Bills, they would be going a great way to facilitate the transaction of business. This was a happy way of introducing the principle once for all of having a Standing Scotch Committee. If they assented to the principle that such a Committee should be set up they would not only get this Bill passed through, but it would have a good effect in saving the time of the House in future, through the organisation of machinery which would be most useful in regard to other Bills. What was the difficulty of doing it? It offered no inconvenient precedent. The Government of the day would always have command of the Committee, and they might very well start an experiment in connection with this Bill which would be most fruitful in the future. He had observed that the Scotch Members who had spoken had not spoken with enthusiasm of the Standing Committee on Law. He thought there were other Scotch Members, without respect to the part of the House in which they sat, who would concede that the adoption of a Scotch Grand Committee on the principle he had laid down would be very satisfactory to them, not only in reference to this Bill, but to the carrying through the House of other Bills dealing with Scotch matters. ["Hear, hear!"]

Question put, "That the words 'the Standing Committee on Law, etc.' stand part of the Question."—The House divided:—Ayes, 193; Noes, 95.—(Division List, No. 155.)

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE BILL.

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) moved the Second Reading of this Bill, the purpose of which was, he said, to acquire the Carrington House site in Whitehall for the purpose of the erection of a War Office. The building space thus afforded would more than accommodate the War Office, but it was not more than sufficient to provide for extensions which might be necessary in a few years. The Bill was based on the unanimous Report of a Select Committee which sat last year to consider the question of sites for public offices. The freehold of the property was vested in the Crown, but it would be necessary to purchase the site from the Commissioners of Woods, which would make no difference from the taxpayers' point of view, because revenue would be obtained, instead of from the Consolidated Fund, from the land revenues of the Crown, which were administered by the Office of Woods. So far as he knew, the Bill was approved on all sides of the House.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) desired to have further information about the scheme, and particularly as to what offices were to be built upon the site, what was to be the total cost, and whether it was intended to provide for the Board of Trade, which, though one of the most important Departments of Government, was at present very inadequately housed. The House ought to know what was the whole programme of the Government in this matter.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS remarked that the right hon. Gentleman had said that the acquisition of this property would practically make no difference to the taxpayers. He should like to know whether the Commissioners of Woods and Forests at the present time received any rents in respect of the property under discussion. If they knew this, they could then ascertain, as a matter of fact, how much these buildings were to cost the nation. Again, the tenants on the property ought to receive some consideration, because for the last 20 years they had been under notices of various kinds, and they never had any idea of what was going to become of the property. He considered that Amendments ought to be moved providing that the interests of the tenants should receive due consideration.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) wished to know what the buildings were going to cost, and what proportion Ireland would have to bear. He had made up his mind that, so far as he could help it, the Government should not get any Bill for erecting buildings, however desirable from the British point of view, in London to the cost of which Ireland would have to contribute, without knowing how much Ireland was to contribute, and whether she was to be treated as a separate entity or as a county of England in these matters. The Government had made up their minds that they wanted time to consider the matter of Imperial contributions, and they had decided to appoint a Commission to investigate the question of the expenditure—

*Mr. SPEAKER: The remarks of the hon. Member are out of order.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN said his point was that he objected to any further expenditure towards which Ireland had to contribute without knowing what benefit she was to derive from it. The Government had appointed a Commission to inquire into the whole question of Imperial contributions (although he submitted they had full knowledge on the subject already), and until that investigation had taken place he considered the Government should withdraw this Bill.

Mr. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.) supported the hon. Member for Kilkenny in opposing any further stages of this Bill at the present time. He objected to Irishmen having to contribute to the beautifying of the streets of London when the money could be much better spent on the hovels in the poor parts of Ireland. He should also like to know whether or not there were to be any evictions in this case, and, if so, what compensation was to be paid the tenants so evicted?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea), as a member of the Sites Committee, supported the remarks of the First Commissioner of Works, and assured the hon. Member for Monaghan that there were to be no evictions. It must be admitted that the present location and relation, both administrative and architecturally, of all their Government Departments in or near that House was a reproach to the Government of this country, and had long been an administrative scandal. The House of Commons had frequently expressed a desire that the block of buildings in Parliament Street should be swept away altogether, and in the interest of the public traffic, and to some extent to carry out the pledge given to London, that at the same time the obstruction to Parliament Street should be removed. Another matter the Committee had to consider was, how they could improve the connection between administrative centres, the different portions of which were spread over a number of buildings not closely connected with each other. The Committee came to the conclusion that, for administrative and economical reasons, the Admiralty and all its buildings should be located on or near where the new Admiralty buildings had been recently erected, and where another wing was in the course of erection. They had to choose whether the War Office should occupy the other side of the Parade quadrangle. He was in favour of that view, but he was beaten by the Committee, and he loyally fell in with the defeat he sustained. The decision of the Committee was, that, failing the new War Office, which was necessary, being placed opposite the new Admiralty buildings, the War Office should be transferred to the Carrington House site. Not a single Member of the House had raised any objection to the site of the new War Office, either on the ground of location or relation to the Admiralty buildings now being erected, and he ventured to say that, failing the eviction of the Treasury—to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would strongly object—the Carrington House site was the next best site they could have for housing the War Office. The Committee decided that the Admiralty buildings should be completed where they were now being located; that the War Office should be transferred from Pall Mall, where it was insufficiently and improperly housed, to the Carrington House site, which would secure that that particular Department should be concentrated in one building. Then the question arose as to what should be done with the Board of Trade. The Committee were roughly of opinion that when the Parliament Street block was removed, they ought to have a block of Government buildings from the corner of Parliament Street and George Street, running so far down as nearly to Storey's Gate, or on that part of the land that the Government had either a whole or joint interest in. He believed that if they carried out that rough scheme, the details of which the Committee to be appointed would thrash out, they would have a clear view from Trafalgar Square to the House of Commons, and the War Office would be properly housed. Then they would be able to properly group the Board of Trade, the Irish Office, and the Labour Department of the Board of Agriculture in buildings which would be compact and beautiful in external appearance. He expected to hear the Irish Members object to the government and administration of Ireland from the mean and disgraceful Irish Office in which its business was now transacted. The Committee had been compelled to consider this accommodation, but they could not do more than they did. This Bill was brought in as a preliminary instalment in order to prevent money from being wasted, and in order to give to the Government offices that accommodation they had so long demanded.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) thought that the hon. Member who had spoken last was a Scotsman.

MR. BURNS: No; I have the honour to be a Londoner. [*Laughter.*]

MR. CLANCY said, at any rate, the hon. Member was of Scottish descent, though he had discussed the question from the point of view of London. He could not see any question from the point of view of London, and he refused to discuss any question either from the point of view of London, or of England, or even from the point of view of the Empire. He discussed this question entirely from the point of view of Ireland. He did not care whether the Irish Office was grouped or whether or not it existed. He wished it were abolished from the face of the earth and the Government that sustained it. Who was going to pay for this land? Was Ireland to help in paying it? Ireland had no interest in buying this land or in building these offices, or in carrying out the work after they were built. It was said that the buildings were necessary for the Army. Irishmen did not want the Army. What Ireland wanted was to be protected from the British Army; therefore, he did not see why Ireland should be asked to contribute anything at all. This was an Imperial charge, and he should like to know in what column of the Treasury Return would the expense appear? Every penny spent would go into the pockets of Englishmen. Would the Government put down to the account of England alone the cost that would be incurred by the passing of the Bill, or would they charge the Empire, and thereby cheat Ireland of so much money? This was a very vital matter. Every Irish Member who had any regard for the material interests of his constituency ought to oppose every Bill by every means in his power which proposed to add to the existing burdens of Ireland.

Mr. W. ALLAN (Gateshead) said he looked at this question from a business point of view. The question was, "Are the offices required?" [Mr. Clancy: "Not by Ireland!"] The bonds between the countries were not yet broken, and as things were the hon. Member ought to know that all portions of the United Kingdom must bear their share of this expense. [Mr. Patrick O'Brien: "We bear too much!"] The protest of the hon. Member was not altogether sound. The money would not go into the pockets of Englishmen, for a large amount of Irish labour would be employed. The First Commissioner had overlooked one grand site in connection with his scheme. A more contemptible set of offices for Government to do its work in he did not think existed; and he asked why the right hon. Gentleman should not continue the present Privy Council buildings, abolish the antiquated buildings called the Scotch Office and the Horse Guards, continuing the site of the Government offices in one group right up to Charing Cross, instead of scattering them.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) said Irish Members were justified in criticising this Bill because Ireland was interested in it to the extent of £45,000. For the last three days the House had been occupied in discussing the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland, and during the Debate it was shown that Ireland contributed an eleventh of Imperial taxation. The fourth clause of the Bill sanctioned a charge on the Consolidated Fund of £500,000, of which Ireland would supply £45,000. He protested against Irish money being devoted to the service of the War Office, a department from the administration of which his country derived no advantage. So far as he could understand the land to be appropriated for this site was the property of Her Majesty, and it seemed to him an extraordinary thing that the State should pay Her Majesty half a million of money for this purpose. The hon. Member for Battersea informed him that in the sense in which Her Majesty's title was used the Government was meant, and if that was so it would seem to be but a transfer of the money from one Government pocket to another. But perhaps Her Majesty did get some substantial sum from the amount. He did not wish to speak with any disrespect of the Sovereign, but he did not think that anyone could bring forward an instance in which Her Majesty had parted with property for the benefit of the State without reasonable consideration. This building was to be raised by Englishmen in England for English purposes, and he joined in the protest of his hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin against a large contribution being demanded from Ireland for such a purpose. Ireland received no *quid pro quo*, and no cause had been shown why Ireland should be required to pay £45,000 for a purpose in which she had no shadow of interest. He associated himself with the protest of his hon. Friend. It had been suggested that Irish labourers would find employment in the building, and he hoped it might be so, but the First Commissioner would give no guarantee of the kind.

*Mr. SPEAKER said the question of what employment would be given on the building had nothing to do with the purchase of the site.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL hoped a Division would be taken against the Bill.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he would, with the permission of the House, answer one or two questions which had been put to him. The hon. Member for Islington asked as to the whole scheme. The Bill, of course, dealt only with the War Office, a part of the scheme considered by the Committee last year. It was proposed eventually to deal with the whole of the offices not now properly housed. The buildings for the Board of Trade, the Education Department, and the extension of the Local Government Board would occupy the site in Great George Street, and certain smaller offices would be in Downing Street. But the principal Department to house was the War Office, and the Committee decided unanimously that this was the only site large enough. The hon. Member for Battersea had expressed a preference for the Horse Guards Parade site, but it was considered that did not afford space enough now and for future extension, and the idea of utilizing that site was reluctantly abandoned. They were guided by the Reports of various Committees which had considered the subject in years past, and all recommended that the War Office should be placed, if not under the same roof, then as near as possible to the Admiralty. The question of tenants' compensation did not arise at all. The price of the land and contingent interests was mentioned in the Bill as under £500,000. The hon. Member for North Dublin asked under what column in the Treasury Accounts the money would be found. The terminable annuities would be provided for annually in the Estimates, and the amount of the Sinking Fund would appear in the Treasury Account.

Mr. CLANCY asked whether the expenditure was to be regarded as an English charge or as an Imperial charge?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Certainly as an Imperial charge. As to whether the site was a sufficient one, the net building area required for the new War Office was 67,000 square feet, and the site provided 74,000 square feet. With regard to the question of the existing accommodation, he need only point out that at present the War Department occupied eight or ten buildings extending from Victoria Street to Pall Mall.

Mr. CALDWELL thought the matter ought to be looked at from a Scotch point of view. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not think the people of Scotland wished to be parsimonious in regard to Government buildings, but there was another aspect of the question under which Scotland and Ireland were treated unfairly in the matter of taxation by the city of London with regard to these buildings. He did not object to their putting up expensive buildings, but he thought that when they were choosing a site there should be some kind of understanding with the local authorities that the Government should not be mulcted in a large amount of local taxation.

Mr. M. J. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) felt bound as an Irish Member to protest against this Bill, under which £45,000 of Irish money was to be expended without conferring any benefit direct or indirect on the Irish people. He would give an instance of the ungenerous way in which Ireland had been treated. In the county of Kerry a fatal calamity occurred, and eight lives were lost—

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is not relevant to the matter under discussion. The hon. Member is entitled to make his protest, but he cannot go into foreign questions.

Mr. FLAVIN said he only desired to point out that when an appeal was made to British charity in the case of the Killarney disaster Her Majesty the Queen contributed £5; and he believed it would have been £100 if the accident had happened in Germany.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

The House divided:—Ayes, 158; Noes, 23.—(Division List, 156.)

Bill Read a Second time.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS moved, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, three to be nominated by the House and two by the Committee of Selection."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) commented upon the system which had grown up of referring Bills of this kind, which were really private Bills, to a hybrid Committee. The experience they had had of hybrid Committees in regard to *quasi* private Bills made it somewhat doubtful as to the rightfulness of referring an important matter of this kind to such a Committee.

*Mr. SPEAKER pointed out that the practice followed here was the universal practice where the Government brought in a Bill which sought what he might call private Bill powers.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he would not oppose the Motion, but the fact of allowing it to pass on this Bill must not be taken as a precedent in regard to the Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) asked how the costs of this inquiry would be shared. Before an ordinary private Bill Committee the costs were shared between the parties. In this case would the costs be shared between the Treasury and the Crown?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he understood the fees to which the hon. Member alluded were paid out of the Vote for Committees, which was taken every year in that House.

Bill committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered,—That all petitions against the Bill presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their counsel or agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered,—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered,—That three be the quorum.—*(Mr. Akers-Douglas.)*

KINGSTOWN HARBOUR ROADS TRANSFER BILL.

On the return of Mr. Speaker, after the usual interval,

*The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston), moved, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time." He said that the Bill was brought forward simply to carry out an agreement that had been made between the Harbour Commissioners and the Town Commissioners of Kingstown. Adjacent to one of the roads some good houses had been built, and although the Harbour Commissioners were undoubtedly bound to maintain it, there was no obligation on them to maintain the road in such a condition as it ought to be maintained in, with, on both sides of it, some good houses and clubs. It would be a great advantage to the Town Commissioners of Kingstown and the people generally, not only that this road should be kept in good condition, but also that it should be extended. The Bill was simply introduced to carry out an agreement whereby the road would be transferred to the Town Commissioners.

Mr. CLANCY: Have the Town Commissioners passed a resolution in favour of the Bill?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It is another Treasury swindle. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Gentleman to withdraw the expression. It is a most improper expression to use. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It was not applied to the right hon. Gentleman. It was applied to the Treasury.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The Secretary to the Treasury was explaining a Treasury Bill, and the hon. Member interrupted him and said it was a Treasury swindle. That is a most improper expression. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I say that the British Treasury are continually swindling Ireland. [*Cries of* "Withdraw!"] I did not cast any imputation on the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Gentleman to withdraw the expression.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I said the British Treasury are continually swindling Ireland.

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is not the expression which the hon. Gentleman used at first, and I must ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I said that the Bill was a Treasury swindle, and I did not mean the expression to apply to the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Whatever the hon. Member meant, it was an improper expression to use, and I hope he will withdraw it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: We were denied our rights yesterday, and I maintain my expression. [*Ministerial cries of* "Order, order!"] It is not a personal one, and it is not unparliamentary. [*Ministerial cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman made use of the expression while the Secretary to the Treasury was speaking, and if it was nothing else, it was a disorderly interruption. ["Hear, hear!"] I must ask him to withdraw the expression.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On that ground, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw it.

*MR. HANBURY, continuing, said that his information was that the Bill was brought in with the full consent of the Town Commissioners, and he contended that it would be of great advantage to them and to the people living on both sides of the road. As hon. Members opposite no doubt knew, a dispute had been going on between the Harbour Commissioners and the Town Commissioners with regard to the Government contribution towards the local rates. He believed the amount in dispute, which had not been paid since 1892, was about £700. That dispute would be arranged under the Bill, and that sum would be repaid, and the Government would bear its share of the rates in future as it did up to 1892. The Bill would really be of advantage to all the three parties concerned—namely, the Harbour Commissioners, the Town Commissioners, and the people living in the road.

MR. T. M. HEALY said the Bill certainly presented the Treasury to the House in a most charming and agreeable light. Irish Members had been appealing for justice to Ireland for a very long time. They had been pressing for Franchise Bills, Local Government Bills, and other Measures, and the universal argument was "We have no time to attend to these matters"; but now the right hon. Gentleman out of his bounty, without anybody asking for it, was good enough, at the suggestion of that paternal body, the British Treasury to present them with this Bill. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] And what did the Bill do? It sought to take from a body the onus of keeping its own road in order, and to cast it on the poor fishermen and artisans of Kingstown. The beneficent British Government, which owed Ireland $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions, now cast on the decaying town of Kingstown the duty, unasked and unsought for, of keeping a Treasury road in repair. ["Hear, hear!"] Every lease in the town would expire within ten years, and would revert to the lords of the soil, Lord de Vesci and Lord Longford. Was a single opinion asked in reference to this matter? Could the Treasury produce a scrap of writing from the Town Commissioners asking them to do this? The right hon. Gentleman said, "We have owed the Town Commissioners £700 for the last seven years." He wondered the British Treasury did not plead the Statute of Limitations. [*Laughter.*] In return for the repayment of that £700 they made the Town Commissioners pay out of the rates for the repair of this road, hitherto borne by the Treasury. The defence was that this was a growing residential neighbourhood. This matter was to be referred to a hybrid Committee, and there was to be power to send for persons, papers, and records; and eminent counsel were to come over from Ireland on behalf of the Kingstown Commissioners to fight the British Treasury. Even the very frame of the Bill was a falsehood. A Government with an income of a hundred millions a year proposed to cast this burden upon a township that had not got a balance to its credit of £100 a year. The Irish Members on that side of the House had pressed the British Treasury on every conceivable subject for the past 15 years, and never from the time he entered the House had they ever had anything but chicanery and dishonesty from the British Treasury. [*Nationalist cheers.*] How would an English Corporation like to be treated in this way? He was sorry the Colonial Secretary was not present to say how he would like Birmingham to be affected in that way. Why were English frauds to be perpetrated on this miserable country, out of which they were driving millions every year. If Ireland were a conquered country, and they occupied it as enemies, as the Prussians had occupied France, they could understand such proceedings, but the Government pretended they were there for all good. Good was never got out of them. They asked every now and then for some little element of relief;

the answer was that the Treasury could only make savings in regard to Ireland, but he observed that this burden was not only cast upon the township of Kingstown, but it had been cast upon them with a chancery suit in addition. Here was the boon which was killing Home Rule with kindness; this was the remedial Measure from a Government which owed this unfortunate township Board £700 and would not pay. Were they not ashamed of themselves? [*Nationalist cheers and Ministerial laughter.*] No doubt this was a laughing matter for Englishmen; but Ireland, as compared with the British Empire, was but small; it could only interest the nation in its local affairs. Irishmen let England alone; they could bombard Crete to their hearts' content. All they sought was that in their local affairs they should not be unfairly treated, and he could only describe this Bill as the essence of Treasury meanness and shabbiness. [*Nationalist cheers.*] They had had this expense for 40 years, and they selected the year of the Diamond Jubilee to give the Irish people this little birthday present. The Irish were quite willing to run their country without one farthing of expense to the British Treasury if this country would be good enough to show them their heels. Ireland did not ask them for a sovereign; all they sought was to control their own money. They only asked to be let alone, and to be allowed to run their own country in their own vulgar, rude, Irish way. [*Laughter.*] They left John Bull to his civilization and his bombardments—[*Nationalist cheers*]— and to the Concert of Europe. [*Laughter.*] When this country built roads for Imperial purposes, let it be good enough to keep them and to maintain them, at any rate, while they obtained every year two and three-quarter millions from Ireland, according to the finding of a Royal Commission. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

Mr. CLANCY said he was astonished to hear the Secretary to the Treasury say that there was any agreement made between the Harbour Commissioners and the Town Commissioners of Kingstown. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to say where and when such an agreement was made. He gathered from the silence of the right hon. Gentleman that he had no answer to make, and he therefore was justified in coming to the conclusion that there was no agreement. His impression was that the Kingstown Town Commissioners disagreed with this proposal, and that at some meeting at Kingstown the greatest dissatisfaction was expressed at this proposal. In Clause 6 of the Bill the object of the Treasury came out in all its nakedness. That clause provided that henceforward these roads should be maintained by the Commissioners of Kingstown, instead of by the Treasury as heretofore. For the purpose of saving about £50 a year to the Treasury this Bill was introduced. A meaner act, a shabbier act, and a more dishonest act on the part of the Treasury had never been perpetrated within his recollection. There was nothing in the Bill providing for the repayment by the Treasury of the £700 which they owed the Kingstown Commissioners. The right hon. Gentleman said it was the intention of the Government to pay it, but if there was no legal warrant for the Treasury not paying for the maintenance of these roads, how could they legally pay the Town Commissioners the money which they owed them in respect of these roads? In return for this fresh taxation—for that was what it amounted to—the Town Commissioners were to get a couple of rocks—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—and even from this was reserved six yards of ground on either side of the obelisk of George IV. A good many of the Irish people regarded this obelisk as a mark of the degradation of the Irish people at the time it was erected. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman expected any harm to this obelisk, but he might rest assured that no harm would come to it. Would the grant of these six yards at either side rob England? The Irish people would like this obelisk. [*Laughter.*] They would like the six yards at either side of it. [*Renewed laughter.*] He really would trouble the House, if this Bill got into Committee, with an effort to keep the obelisk and the six yards at either side of it. [*Laughter.*] On the opposite side of Dublin Bay was the harbour of Howth. This was also a royal harbour, but the Government would not give the money to render it navigable, and yet insisted on keeping it in their own hands. To resort to this device in the present case for saving a paltry £100 seemed to him to reach the very nadir of British Treasury meanness and dishonesty. ["Hear, hear!"] He regretted that the other Member for the County Dublin was not present, as he felt sure he would have his support. Unless the right hon. Gentleman produced evidence that the Town Commissioners of Kingstown—

*MR. HANBURY: There is a distinct written agreement made last year with the Town Commissioners, and this Bill carries out distinctly that agreement. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. CLANCY said an agreement between two public bodies such as Harbour Commissioners and Town Commissioners must be under seal, and must be founded on resolutions of those public bodies. That agreement should have been laid on the Table, or at all events mentioned in the preamble to the Bill. Until some evidence of this kind was produced he would strenuously oppose the Bill.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that this was a typical case of the way things in Ireland were managed by this country. This road was in a wealthy district in Ireland called Kingstown. It was used by the inhabitants, and was apparently a useful road, and yet his constituents in London were asked to keep it going. As an English Member he protested against that monstrous proposal. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth had said that they wanted nothing from England. Then let them pay this paltry sum themselves and not ask his constituents to contribute to it.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said that it might set the hon. Member's mind at ease to know that this road did not belong to the inhabitants of the locality, but to the British Government, with whose works it formed a connection.

MR. BARTLEY: But Irishmen use it.

MR. MAURICE HEALY said that had nothing to do with the matter. A Bill of this kind was a gross abuse of the forms of the House. It was practically an attempt to pass what was in effect a private Bill as a public Bill. All the forms of a private Bill were violated. For example, the agreement was not recited in the preamble and set forth in the schedule. The Secretary to the Treasury did not know whether an agreement had been come to.

*MR. HANBURY: I said distinctly that an agreement had been come to.

MR. MAURICE HEALY said he was within the recollection of the House when he stated that what the right hon. Gentleman said was, that he could not say that an agreement had been come to or that Resolutions had been passed, but that the Commissioners of Kingstown were in favour of the proposal. It was easy to say that a public body were in favour of a proposal; but the only way in which that could be shown was by the body passing Resolutions and entering into a formal written agreement. If such an agreement existed, why was it not produced? But if it were produced, he should regard it with the gravest suspicion. The Government and the Commissioners had, for the last few years, had a dispute about the road. The Government, he presumed, demanded that the Commissioners should take over the road, and the Commissioners repudiated the responsibility. Then the Government refused any longer to pay rates for the Government buildings in the locality, though rates were paid for Government buildings all over the country. If the agreement had been forced on the Commissioners by this means, it was worth nothing. This was a Bill which, to save the British Government a few pounds a year, sought to throw on a little Irish body the maintenance of some thousand yards of road. All the machinery of an Act of Parliament was invoked for this purpose. When the Government were asked for Irish reforms, they always replied that they could not possibly find the time. They had always plenty of time for Bills of this sort. The Irish Members would not assent to the Measure till they knew all about it; and he begged to move that the Bill be Read a Second time on that day six months.

MR. J. P. FARRELL seconded the Motion, saying the matter was one which should not be allowed to pass without further explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury. Many small Bills affecting Irish interests had been introduced by the Government, most of them after midnight, which looked very harmless and simple; but which, on examination, proved to contain matter of an insidious and harmful character to the interests of Ireland. He remembered the Attorney

General for Ireland introducing a small Bill, which seemed—

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must confine himself to the Bill before the House.

MR. J. P. FARRELL said he would not pursue the matter a step further than the Speaker's ruling allowed. But Clause 6 of this Bill imposed on the township of Kingstown not only the taking over of these roads in their present condition, but the expense of maintaining and repairing, as well as lighting and watering, the transferred roads and footways. The roads had been neglected for some years past, and probably one of the first things the Commission would have to do would be to expend a large sum in repairing the roads. He agreed with the hon. Member for North Louth that this was not the time to impose the smallest further taxation upon any Irish town. The three days Debate on the Financial Relations between England and Ireland ought to convince any Irish Member that the Government had no claim to come to the House and ask them to pass any Measure which would inflict the hardship of additional taxation on any Irish town. The Bill had many grave defects in it. As had been pointed out, Clause 8 would not only involve the transfer of land but involve the Commissioners of Kingstown in a serious law suit, which, as the House knew entailed, now-a-days, serious expense. If the matter had to be fought out before a Select Committee of the House, still more expense would be incurred. His hon. Friends had done well to raise the question, and he hoped it would be pressed to a Division.

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.) opposed the Bill, saying that a trick like this sprung upon the House ought not to be allowed to pass. The hon. Member for North Louth let the cat out of the bag when he pointed out that this Bill was brought forward to benefit the owners of property in Kingstown. In ten years the property that adjoined this road would fall into the hands of the landlords, the value of whose property would be considerably enhanced at the expense of the ratepayers of Kingstown, who, for the next ten years would have to keep the road in repair. As Irish representatives they would not be doing their duty if they allowed this Bill to pass without giving it, as they intended to do, their most strenuous opposition. When the Government did anything which was pretended to be for the good of Ireland he always regarded it with great suspicion. What was the position of the right hon. Gentleman? He was dictating the payment of this money. He was going to pay £700 to the Kingstown Commissioners, but he said if they accepted the money they must keep the road in repair. It was simply absurd. He could not see that it was honest. The right hon. Gentleman laid it down to the Commissioners that if they did not accept the money on the terms the right hon. Gentleman wished, they would not have it at all. He talked about a dispute between the Harbour Commissioners and the Town Commissioners. He knew the Town Commissioners could not erect any buildings without the consent of the Harbour Commissioners. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was going to settle the matter once and for all, but that was not the case, for it did not appear that the disputes of the past were not to continue in the future. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to amend this portion of the Bill, at any rate. Perhaps the Kingstown Town Commissioners might not be under the Grand Jury. To say that this road was to be made, and that the keeping of it might fall under the control of the Grand Jury was a thing he protested against, and every Irish Member would protest against it. He would only say, in conclusion, that he did not like buying a pig in a poke. Even if he had no one to support him, he would oppose this Bill being Read a Second time, unless the right hon. Gentleman explained the different points he had brought before the House. The way the right hon. Gentleman had introduced the Bill filled him with suspicion. While Irish Members had been deluged with circulars from interested quarters in Kingstown asking them to vote for this Bill, had there been a single circular from anybody in Dublin asking them to vote for it? Certainly not. They had to take the right hon. Gentleman's word. The right hon. Gentleman wanted to get rid of this legacy. The right thing to do would be to let the Government keep this little bit of ground. Unless the right hon. Gentleman explained himself, he would give the Second Reading his opposition, and he had pleasure in supporting the Motion that the Bill be Read a Second time this day six months.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN associated himself with his colleagues from Ireland in this matter. He would reserve what he had to say on the merits of the Bill to a future occasion. He assumed the right hon. Gentleman would, with his usual courtesy, desire to give full explanations, but probably he felt he suffered from disability, because he would not be in order in doing so on the Motion before the House. With the view of placing the right hon. Gentleman in order, he begged to move the adjournment of the Debate, so as to enable him to produce the proofs which he said he had in his possession that the people of Kingstown desired to have this Bill. He took it they need not be in a hurry with this Bill. The Government had been galloping over a course of Bills, and getting money night after night, and he rather thought the Irish Members were to blame for having, so to speak, demoralised the Government into the condition that they did not desire to give time to anything that concerned Ireland. The experience of the last few days had opened the eyes of the Irish Members to the error of their ways, and the Government in future might calculate on having every step of their course, and every proposal they made for spending money, questioned by the Irish Members. He did not desire to delay the business, and would, therefore, conclude by moving the adjournment of the Debate.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think that Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House. I have the alternative of either refusing it, or taking an immediate Division upon it, and I adopt the latter course.

The House divided:—Ayes, 60; Noes, 160.—(Division List, No. 157.)

MR. T. M. HEALY rose to continue the Debate on the original Question, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question," when,

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) moved, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 164; Noes, 67.—(Division List, No. 158.)

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 165; Noes, 68.—(Division List, No. 159.)

MR. T. M. HEALY, on a Question of order, asked whether this was a hybrid Bill, and if so whether the Speaker had satisfied himself that the procedure in regard to hybrid Bills had been regularly followed?

*MR. SPEAKER: The Bill has been before the Examiners and they have certified that on all those matters of which they have cognisance the Standing Orders have been complied with. Therefore it is ripe for Second Reading.

*MR. HANBURY claimed to move "That the main Question be now put."

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."

The House divided:—Ayes, 171; Noes, 67.—(Division List, No. 160.)

Bill Read a Second time.

*MR. HANBURY moved,

"That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection; that all petitions against the Bill presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their counsel, or agents, be heard against the Bill, and counsel heard in support of the Bill; that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; that three be the quorum."

Mr. T. M. HEALY moved to omit the word "Select" in order to insert the word "Standing." This would, he said, give the Government the opportunity of saying whether they preferred to send this Bill to the Standing Committee on Law or the Standing Committee on Trade.

*Mr. SPEAKER said he thought the Amendment would not be in order. This was a Motion which must be made according to the regular practice of the House in the case of a public Bill which sought private Bill powers.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that surely it was open to the House to take any course they liked in regard to a particular Bill—either to send it to a Private Bill, a Select, or a Standing Committee. He submitted with confidence that there was no Standing Order governing the matter, and that it was the invariable practice to put the reference to the Committee as a separate question.

*Mr. SPEAKER said the usual course in such a case was to put the Motion as a whole. The hon. Member could not move to dispense with the Select Committee, and substitute a Standing Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that when the Bill had been withdrawn from the purview of the House and it came back, he would move that it be referred to a Grand Committee. At the present moment he confined himself to moving that the word "five" be omitted, and the word "fifteen" be substituted. If that were carried he would move a consequential Motion. This was a Bill in which English Members had little concern. The proposal, as he understood it, was to refer the Bill to a Committee of five, of whom three only were to be selected by the House. The Irish Members' proportion of three would be nil, because the Government would be entitled to two Members, and the Liberal Opposition to one. This proposal amounted to a device to carry the Bill through a Committee from which Irish Members were excluded. Nobody had more confidence in the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxfordshire (Sir J. Mowbray) than he had, but he maintained that this was not a case for the Committee of Selection at all. The Committee of Selection were to take into view considerations affecting parties and the like, but this was a question of Ireland *versus* England—[*interruption*]—a question of all Ireland against the British Treasury.

Mr. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont) claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question. Debate resumed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that they were not in Crete yet. [*Nationalist cheers.*] One would think the hon. Member was Sir A. Biliotti at a drumhead Court-Martial. [*Renewed cheers.*] This might be a simple question from the point of view of English millionaires, but the people who were being robbed by the English Treasury were entitled to say that the Committee of Selection was not the proper tribunal to decide this matter, and that the proper tribunal was the House of Commons. The Committee of Selection would have to select two Members. Again, of the two seats Irishmen would be entitled to neither. Was that a fair way to proceed if hon. Members wanted to get on to the Berriew School Bill? [*Laughter.*] A more dangerous performance he had never known. The fault was not theirs that precedence had been given to this Bill. Accordingly, as he had said at the outset, they were entitled to maintain that the ordinary rules of the House ought to be upheld. Out of the 15, what chance would they have? They would only have two Members to meet the embattled might—[*laughter*]—of the supporters of the Bill. He said it was a monstrous thing to propose to shut them out. Two Members of the Government, unless they waived their right in favour of some more intelligent Members of their Party—[*laughter*]—would be entitled to be on the Committee. Who was to be the other one? Why, some Gentleman sitting on the Front Opposition Bench. Would any one pretend that that was fair? He said that it was a most unfair thing. He had yet to learn that Kingstown had the power to spend money out of the rates in order to come over there and meet the Treasury Council. The only other case that he remembered of a Bill of this kind being dealt with in this way was the Ulster Canal Bill. What hope could the Irish Members have of carrying their point of view in a small Committee, of whom two would be representatives of the Treasury, the promoters of the Bill? They would only have to put on one other Gentleman who would support them in order to carry the whole Bill. In the case of a Bill like this, which came before the House under such unfavourable auspices, it would be only fair that the tribunal should not be a hole-and-corner one, and that the House at large should have some voice in its composition. ["Hear, hear!"]

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) seconded the Motion. He complained that while the Public Health (Scotland) Bill had been sent to the Grand Committee, this Bill, simply because it was an Irish Bill, was to go to a Select Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER said that this was not done in lieu of sending the Bill to the Standing Committee. This was a proceeding which the ordinary practice of the House provided in order that persons whose private rights were affected might have an opportunity of appearing and being heard. After the Bill had been before the Committee, it would come back for consideration by a Committee of the whole House.

MAJOR JAMESON contended that a Committee of 15 would be much fairer to the Irish Members. With a Committee of five, no one else but the Treasury, who were the promoters of the Bill, would have a chance, and therefore they asked the House to appoint a Committee of 15.

*MR. HANBURY said the hon. Member for Louth had based his Amendment on two theories; one, that there would be no adequate Irish representation, and the other that the Treasury would be too strongly represented on this Committee. With regard to the Treasury, he could assure the hon. Member that there was no intention whatever to put two Treasury representatives on the Committee. He was sure also that it was the wish of the Government, who could not control the Committee of Selection, but could control the nomination of Members by the House, that the Irish Members should be adequately represented. But, after all, although the hon. Member spoke so strongly as to Irishmen being represented on the Committee, the only persons properly concerned were the people of Kingstown and the Town Commissioners, and, as he had explained—

MR. T. M. HEALY, rising to order, said that he was stopped when referring to the merits of the Bill, and he submitted that the right hon. Gentleman, having declined to avail himself of two opportunities he had had to go into the matter, was now not in order in so doing.

*MR. SPEAKER said the right hon. Gentleman might perhaps be progressing in that direction, but he did not think he was yet out of order. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. HANBURY said this was not really a very important Irish interest, and there was no opposition from the persons most concerned in Ireland. He thought there was no necessity for increasing the number of the Committee, for the reasons which he had given.

MR. CLANCY said he wondered why, if the right hon. Gentleman had the agreement of which he had spoken in his pocket, he did not produce it, or at least the Resolution upon which it was founded. Would the Government say they would not have another Member on the Committee supporting the Treasury? In accordance with the invariable practice of every Government, they would, he ventured to say, insist on having a majority of their own supporters. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would agree to refer the Bill to a Committee of one Treasury representative and two Irish Members? The fact was this Bill was for the benefit of the Treasury, and until the right hon. Gentleman produced the agreement, or gave them a guarantee on the subject, he should support the Amendment.

MR. MAURICE HEALY said that until they had some guarantee that this Measure was not objectionable to the Commissioners they must treat it as being contentious. The framing of the Motion showed that the Treasury regarded it as a contentious Measure, which was to be fought out by counsel. The right hon. Gentleman had not answered the point as to the Commissioners not being able to employ counsel before this body. He did not know whether it was permissible for the Court of Selection to put a Member having an interest in the Bill—say the hon. Member for this division of County Dublin—but if that could be done he asked an assurance from the Government that the hon. Member for South Dublin, who was a supporter of the Government, and against whom, therefore, nothing could be said from a Party point of view, should be one of the three Members of the Committee. However, the proposal to refer the Bill to a Committee of five had been conclusively demonstrated to be an unfair proposal. The right hon. Gentleman had not attempted to defend it except on the ground that the Bill was a non-contentious Bill; but instead of that being the fact the Bill was one that would be sharply contested by the people of Kingstown and the Town Commissioners of Kingstown.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I rise, Sir, to move the adjournment of the Debate. [*Cheers.*] My reason for doing so is this. This Bill was brought in by my right hon. Friend for no other purpose than to benefit the township of Kingstown, and it was brought in by agreement with the Kingstown Town Commissioners. [*Cheers.*] Under those circumstances we had a right to expect different treatment from hon. Members opposite than that we have received from them. [*Cheers.*] But, inasmuch as these hon. Members are determined to waste the time of the House on what is really a private Bill—a Bill brought in to save the township of Kingstown the cost of bringing in a private Bill—[*cheers*]—we see no use in prolonging the Debate. I therefore move that the Debate be now adjourned, and I shall subsequently propose that the Order be discharged. [*Cheers.*]

MR. T. M. HEALY said that when they a little while ago moved a similar Motion, they were not allowed to give their reasons, but were closured, and if there had been any time wasted it was wasted by the Government. [*Cheers.*] He denied that the Bill had been brought in for the benefit of Kingstown. [*Cheers.*] It deprived Kingstown of over £700 that was due to her from the Treasury in regard to those roads. It was a very excellent lesson they had learned from the action of the right hon. Gentleman. It showed that by a little courage and a little firmness, even the greatest swindles of the Treasury could be unmasked and could be scotched. [*Cheers.*] They had saved Kingstown from a gross imposition, and they had exposed the British Treasury—as they had exposed them last year on several occasions—in the act of committing a fraud on the taxpayers. [*Cheers.*] He had only to remind the House, in conclusion, that in the course of the two hours' Debate on the Bill the Secretary to the Treasury had sent round to the Treasury for the alleged agreement which he said he possessed. [*Cries of* "Oh!"]

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): On a point of order, Sir, is the hon. Member in order in attributing fraud to the Treasury Bench, and in using the word "alleged" in reference to the statements of the Secretary to the Treasury?

*MR. SPEAKER: The use of the word "alleged" is improper if it was used in the sense, as it seemed to me that it was, of suggesting that something stated by the right hon. Gentleman was not true. As to the word "fraud" in connection with the Treasury, such words are extremely objectionable in Debate; but, unless they amount to a specific personal allegation against an hon. Member, they are hardly out of order. The action of the Government, as a whole, can be denounced in much stronger language than can be used about an individual Member of the House. But the hon. and learned Member goes extremely near the line.

MR. T. M. HEALY said that for the word "alleged" he would substitute the word "postulated." [*Laughter.*] The Secretary to the Treasury had sent for the agreement, and though the Government had had three opportunities of producing the agreement, it had not been produced.

Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," put, and agreed to.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I move that the order be discharged.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in charge of the Bill. [*Cheers and laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I move, Sir.

Bill withdrawn amid loud Nationalist cheers.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read the Third time, and passed.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY (TRANSFER OF PATRONAGE) BILL.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE moved the Second Reading of this Bill. He explained that its object was simply, for the sake of convenience, to transfer to the University the patronage of a Chair vested in the Crown, and to transfer to the Crown, in exchange, the patronage of a Chair vested in the University.

MR. CALDWELL suggested that the next stage of the Bill should not be taken until after Easter, so that the Council of the University, which met shortly, might have an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon it.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: Certainly, Sir. I agree to that.

Read a Second time, and committed for Monday 3rd May.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."—Debate arising; and, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned; to be resumed upon Monday next.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUNDS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

FOREIGN PRISON MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

RAILWAY ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 30th April.

COUNTY COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 30th April.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Monday 26th April.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till Monday next.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

NAVY AND MARINES (WILLS) ACT (1865) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Navy and Marines (Wills) Act 1865, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney and Mr. Attorney General; presented, and read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 183.]

CHAFF-CUTTING MACHINES ACCIDENTS.

Bill for the prevention of Accidents by Chaff-cutting Machines, ordered to be brought in by Captain Pretyman, Lord Alwyne Compton, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Beaumont, Earl of Dalkeith, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Giles, Mr. Channing, and Mr. F. W. Wilson; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 184.]

House Adjourned at Five Minutes after Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 2nd April 1897.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next. (The Marquess of Lansdowne).—[No. 43.]

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read 1ª; and to be printed.—[No. 44.]

ESTATE DUTY (PICTURES AND WORKS OF ART, ETC.)

*EARL STANHOPE asked Her Majesty's Government whether they proposed to formulate by Treasury minute, or by any other means, a definite rule as to the administration of Clause 20 of the Finance Act with regard to pictures and works of art, etc. He had, he said, found a general impression prevailing that pictures, works of art, manuscripts, and books that were made heirlooms, and therefore not saleable, were exempt from estate duty, but that was not at all the case. The clause set forth that

> "Where any property passing on the death of a deceased person consists of such pictures, prints, books, MSS., works of art, scientific collections, or other things not yielding income appear to the Treasury to be of national, scientific, or historic interest, and is settled so as to be enjoyed in kind in succession by different persons, such property shall not, on the death of such deceased person, be aggregated with other property, but shall form an estate by itself, and while enjoyed in kind by a person not competent to dispose of the same be exempt from estate duty; but if it is sold or is in possession of some person who is then competent to dispose of the same shall become liable for estate duty."

The administration of Clause 20 was left entirely to the Treasury, who, as he had ascertained, would be guided by the opinion of the President of the National Gallery. That was rather vague, and was a happy-go-lucky arrangement which might vary with different Chancellors of the Exchequer. The object of his Question was to ascertain whether some definite rule could not be laid down in the matter. In this country there were some very great collections, containing many pictures which were open to the public for inspection, and many which were sent to the exhibitions. At Petworth House the pictures were always open to the public; they had been frequently exhibited at the Royal Academy, and yet only some of these pictures would be exempted from paying estate duty. The same was the case in many other collections he could name. The inevitable result of such an arrangement would be that in two or three generations, after paying heavy duties, pictures would not remain in a family, but would probably go abroad. Who would then be the sufferers? They would be the public, the very persons in whose interest the Act was passed. ["Hear, hear!"] In Italy there was a law which prevented pictures and works of art leaving the country, or, if they did leave, they had to pay a tax to the Government. He would suggest that some means should be adopted of defining what pictures, generally speaking, were of historic or national importance. Whilst recognising the difficulty of formulating any particular rule, he thought that in the decision of such a question it was possible to include, besides the President of the National Gallery, the Chairman of the National Portrait Gallery, and, perhaps, other competent judges—in fact, a small committee of competent judges of works of art and pictures, or even a small departmental committee, should be associated with this inquiry. It was a very hard thing for individuals to go to law with the State in order to have cases cited for precedents. Collections, whether scientific, historic, or national, were of such importance that it would be a sad thing for the country if, in 50 years' time, they were not merely to change hands, which would be of little moment, but were to be taken out of the country.

LORD ARUNDELL OF WARDOUR agreed with the noble Earl that Clause 20 of the Finance Act was so vague as to the exemptions which might be made as to prove embarrassing to the possessors of works or art and their successors. Take the case of a man who found himself in the absolute possession of a collection.

In view of the death duties, he did not want to tie up all the pictures, but, before bringing some of them into settlement, it was vital to know what pictures would be brought under the protection of this clause. He could not see why a minute should not be framed on the subject, or, at any rate, why the information should not be obtainable during a man's lifetime. The inequality in the operation of the clause was one of the greatest grievances connected with it. It was not so in the case of men who died possessed of property in shares or stock. For instance, upon £100,000 of such property £6,000 would be paid, and there liability would cease. But in the case of lands, shops, factories, and also of galleries of works of art, the property was subject to valuation, and taxed according to valuation, and every valuation was a superadded tax. It was especially so in the case of land, where the tax was not upon what was received, not upon the net but upon the gross, upon which a man did not receive more than a half or a third of his rental. Under such circumstances it could not be expected that possessors of works of art not yielding income would always keep them back from sale; it was all they could fall back upon to pay the duty. If they were not brought under the clause few pictures would be brought into settlement and more would pass out of the country. He considered the letter he wrote to *The Times* on October 31, 1895, as establishing the facts, and should continue to consider, until he was refuted, that the grounds on which Sir W. Harcourt justified his exceptional treatment of land were founded on a mistake in historical reference. He did not hold Sir W. Harcourt responsible for the statement; he was misled by his authority, Hallam, who again was misled by a loose and inaccurate statement in the Parliamentary history. But he was not entitled to go into that question now, but he hoped that due consideration would be given to the question of the noble Lord.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount CROSS) said that the only answer he could give his noble Friends was to ask them to have a little patience. He had been requested by the Treasury to give the following answer:—That in the opinion of the Treasury it is not possible to lay down by Treasury minute or otherwise a definite rule for the interpretation of the section; that, as was stated while the section was under discussion in Parliament, the Treasury will be disposed to interpret it with due liberality after taking the advice of experts in such matters; and that in process of time a series of precedents must necessarily be accumulated, which will be of practical importance in guiding future decisions. [*Laughter.*]

*EARL STANHOPE was much obliged to his noble Friend for his answer, but it was so unsatisfactory that it was his intention to call the attention of the House to the circumstances, and to the administration of the clause immediately after Easter.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES, the EARL of MORLEY, in the Chair.]

Clause 1,—

AID GRANT TO VOLUNTARY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

(1.) For aiding Voluntary Schools there shall be annually paid out of moneys provided by Parliament an aid grant, not exceeding in the aggregate five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools.

(2.) The aid grant shall be distributed by the Education Department to such Voluntary Schools and in such manner and amounts as the Department think best for the purpose of helping necessitous schools and increasing their efficiency, due regard being had to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions.

(3.) If associations of schools are constituted in such manner in such areas and with such governing bodies representative of the managers as are approved by the Education Department, there shall be allotted to each association while so approved,

(*a*) a share of the aid grant, to be computed according to the number of scholars in the schools of the association at the rate of five shillings per scholar, or, if the Department fix different rates for town and country schools respectively (which they are hereby empowered to do) then at those rates; and

(*b*) a corresponding share of any sum which may be available out of the aid grant after distribution has been made to unassociated schools.

(4.) The share so allotted to each such association shall be distributed as aforesaid by the Education Department after consulting the governing body of the association, and in accordance with any scheme prepared by that body which the Department for the time being approve.

(5.) The Education Department may exclude a school from any share of the aid grant which it might otherwise receive, if, in the opinion of the Department, it unreasonably refuses or fails to join such an association, but the refusal or failure shall not be deemed unreasonable if the majority of the schools in the association belong to a religious denomination to which the school in question does not itself belong.

(6.) The Education Department may require, as a condition of a school receiving a share of the aid grant, that the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the school shall be annually audited in accordance with the regulations of the Department.

(7.) The decision of the Education Department upon any question relating to the distribution or allotment of the aid grant, including the question whether an association is or is not in conformity with this Act, and whether a school is a town or a country school, shall be final.

The first Amendment on the Paper stood in the name of EARL SPENCER, who proposed, in Sub-section (2), after the words "such Voluntary Schools," to insert the words "as provide for the representation of local authorities or parents on the management thereof."

Before the Amendment was moved,

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD HALSBURY) called attention to the position in which this Amendment stood, and did so at once for the sake of saving time, for he thought the same question would arise on most, if not all, of the Amendments proposed to be moved. The Bill was for the purpose of making certain grants in aid to Voluntary Schools. The Rule—and he called it a Rule, for, although it was originally a protest and a Resolution of the other House, it had, as Sir Thomas May said in his book, been acted upon as a Rule of Parliamentary procedure for some three hundred years —was

> "that all aids and supplies, and aids to His Majesty in Parliament are the sole gift of the Commons, and all Bills for the granting of any such aids and supplies ought to begin with the Commons; and that it is the undoubted and sole right of the Commons to direct, limit and appoint in such Bills the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations and qualifications of such grants, which ought not to be charged or altered by the House of Lords."

Sir Thomas May went on to say,

> "It is upon this latter resolution that all proceedings between the two Houses in matters of supply are now founded."

Upon this Parliament had acted ever since, and in the circumstances he put it to the noble and learned Lord opposite whether he agreed with him in the construction to be put upon the words? He had no authority, although Speaker of the House, to decide Questions of Order. Had he that right, he should decide that the Amendment standing in the name of Earl Spencer was out of order; but he now only put it to the noble Earl and the noble and learned Lord beside him whether it was possible, in the face of the authority he had quoted, to say that the Amendment was in order? If it were not in order, then it would be hardly respectful to the House to discuss matters and come to a decision to which their Lordships could give no practical effect, because, if the Amendment were passed it would, as a privileged Amendment, have to be again struck out of the Bill.

LORD HERSCHELL said no doubt if the Amendment came within the privilege of the other House, it could not be inserted in the Bill in this House. His noble and learned Friend said he had no power to decide the point, but no doubt, if he were to take the opinion of their Lordships' House upon it, and said he was satisfied that the Amendment was out of order, there could be no doubt of the result, having regard to the relative number of the forces to decide; and, therefore, if the noble and learned Lord took that view, it would be of no use asserting the contrary.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said he would like to know whether the noble and learned Lord agreed with him or not?

LORD HERSCHELL had not the slightest objection to say he thought it was a doubtful matter, but did not think it was so clear as his noble and learned Friend took it to be. There was no doubt that their Lordships could not amend any portion of a Bill so as to alter by increase or deduction the charge of the persons who would receive or control it. It was a question whether the Amendment came within the meaning of the words "pay, receive, manage or control." No doubt, if the Bill specifically gave a certain grant to particular schools, to insert a provision which would prevent a school receiving such grant would obviously be a violation of privilege, but all the Bill did was to hand over to the Education Department a sum of money for distribution, with very wide and general provisions; it did not give a grant to any specific school, and no school managers could say they were entitled to receive the grant. It was to be distributed over certain Voluntary Schools in such a manner as the Department might think best. The Question was, whether the Amendment could be said to be an interference with those who were to receive the grant?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said he had only endeavoured to get the noble and learned Lord's opinion, which was of high value, in reference to the considerations and conditions in the words he had quoted.

LORD HERSCHELL said this was one of the conditions to which the Education Department was to have regard in the matter—one of the conditions they were to take into account in distributing the grant; it did not exclude any school from receiving it; and the whole matter was left absolutely at large for distribution by the Education Department.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said surely not, for the first Amendment was to insert a new condition to provide for the representation of local authorities or parents on the management.

LORD HERSCHELL said no doubt it was a direction to the Education Department, but the question was whether this came within the principle, and affected the people who were to receive the grant, which grant was not made specifically to any school or schools, but left to be distributed by the Education Department. He would not press the matter further. Certainly if the Amendment were out of order, it pointed the objection to dealing with a great education question in such a manner that the House was impotent to take part in deciding it. It was not impossible so to frame the Bill that the House should take part in the consideration of the conditions under which schools should receive assistance from the State. If the House was precluded from discussing, from an educational point of view, what was to be the distribution of the money for education with a view to educational efficiency, then it seemed to him the House was deprived of the means of dealing with one of the most important questions ever brought before Parliament.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said if a decision were going to be taken on this point, its importance should be recognised, because if the House were precluded from discussing any conditions which appeared in a Bill making a grant of public money out of the Exchequer, then their Lordships would have no power to modify the words of any clause in Committee on such a Bill. The present Bill provided for a grant from the Exchequer, and to exempt certain schools from rates, and it repealed Section 19, known as the 17s. 6d. limit Section. Here were three propositions, each dealing with money. In Clause 1 Earl Spencer proposed to insert certain words having reference to representation on the school management, but how did that affect the grant? Why should not their Lordships discuss a question of this sort, which did not touch any money grant? If their Lordships were to alter the 5s. to some other figure, there would be interference with the grant. There had been cases in which the question had arisen, and their Lordships would remember what took place in reference to the Parish Councils Bill, in which first the House decided it would interfere and subsequently found it was mistaken, and had not the power; but if the question raised by the Amendment—not saying what his view of it was—should be considered out of order, then Committee discussions in the House would not be of much use.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL congratulated his noble and Radical Friends on their gallant attempt to assert in a high degree the privileges of the House. Where was poor Lord Rosebery? He and his friends had threatened the House with destruction, and now there was a series of Amendments on what was undoubtedly a money Bill asserting the power of the House not only to reject, but to alter such a Bill. He did not venture to put his opinion in antagonism to the opinions of his two noble and learned Friends, but with regard to the constitutional doctrine, he had always understood that the footing upon which the House stood with regard to the House of Commons Resolution, quoted by his noble and learned Friend, was that if the House of Lords altered a money Bill—there was no question of the power of the House to reject it—it did so at the peril of losing the Bill. It was not that the House had no right to do it. They had never acknowledged that doctrine, so far as he knew. The series of Amendments which had been placed on the Table by the noble Lords opposite asserted the power and the right of that House to amend money Bills, the penalty being that if they did so the Bill would be lost in the House of Commons. But then the noble Lords wanted the Bill to be lost, and that was the whole secret of these Amendments. He took another objection, and that was that the first Amendment was against the principle of the Bill. The Bill was to assist Voluntary Schools. The very first Amendment would actually alter the constitution of Voluntary Schools as they knew them in this country. Lord Herschell said the other night that all the Voluntary Schools were ecclesiastical or denominational schools. The moment they insisted on the denominational schools admitting a large representation from public bodies, they entirely altered their constitution. They were no longer Voluntary Schools in the sense in which they understood them.

LORD HERSCHELL said there were a considerable number of Voluntary Schools now which had local representation upon them.

THE DUKE of ARGYLL said he knew that, but what had that to do with it? This Bill gave a grant in aid of 5s. to Voluntary Schools. Noble Lords opposite said, "We will shut out all Voluntary Schools which are of a particular constitution," though these formed 99-100ths of the whole.

THE EARL of KIMBERLEY said he thought it was very unfortunate that, after an objection had been raised, no doubt with great propriety, against the possibility of such an Amendment as this being introduced into this House, the noble Duke should proceed to discuss it. The noble Duke said this grant was for all Voluntary Schools. If he would read the Bill, he would see that in certain cases, where a Voluntary School did not belong to an association, it was excluded from the grant. With regard to what the noble Duke had said as to Lord Rosebery, he would remind him that his noble Friend had nothing whatever to do with this matter, and he did not think his remark was in extremely good taste. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, he was not foolish enough to desire to lead the House, even if he had the power, to infringe the privileges of the other House. The question was merely whether the Amendment did that? He thought that, after what had been said by the noble and learned Lord opposite, who was necessarily an authority to be recognised in that House, it would not be right for them to press the matter further.

LORD COLERIDGE said the Bill provided that the Education Department should apply the grant as they thought best "for the purpose of increasing the efficiency" of the schools. By the second Amendment Lord Kimberley defined what in his opinion was efficiency, and he would like to ask whether that was a violation of the orders?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: It adds a condition to the grant of money, which is within the express language of the protest of the House of Commons.

EARL SPENCER said that, after what had been said by the Lord Chancellor and others, he would not move the Amendment which stood in his name.

THE EARL of KIMBERLEY said he thought that the same argument distinctly applied to the next Amendment—[in Sub-section (2), after the word "efficiency," to insert the words,

> "in accordance with regulations which will insure that it shall be applied—
>
> "(*a*) in improving the teaching staff as regards number, qualification, or salary; and so far as it is not in the opinion of the Education Department required for that purpose;
>
> "(*b*) in the payment of the teaching staff, the provision of special teachers, whether on the permanent staff or not, and in the improvement of the education of pupil teachers; and
>
> "(*c*) in the improvement of the educational fittings and apparatus of the school, and in otherwise increasing its efficiency"]—

and therefore he would not move it. As to the next Amendment, which stood in his name, and which had reference to the constitution of the associations—[in Sub-section (3), after the word "managers," to insert the words,

> "and consisting as to not less than one-half of persons not clerks in holy orders, or ministers of any religious denomination,"

and, further, to leave out the words, "approved by the Education Department," and to insert the words,

"prescribed by schemes made by the Education Department, and published and laid before Parliament"]—

he would like to say that he thought there was a very good argument in favour of considering that it did not infringe in any way the privileges of the House of Commons. These associations were purely voluntary bodies, which might give advice, but which advice the Education Department was in no way bound to follow. Consequently, the opinion that the associations might give was not in any way an opinion which could limit the discretion as to the granting of the money, and was not a condition of the granting of the money. He would like to hear whether the Lord Chancellor took that view?

The LORD CHANCELLOR: I am afraid I do not take that view, because I think it comes within "management." The language of the protest includes the management, and I think that this touches the management.

Lord HERSCHELL did not think the objection to the first Amendment applied to this Amendment. As he understood, these associations were not to manage. They could not control—that was what they had been told—the expenditure of one penny. All they could do was to give advice to the Education Department, and surely they did not interfere with the money grant in any sort of way in dealing with the nature of the bodies who were to give advice. He submitted to the Lord Chancellor that this did not come within the language of the protest.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said he hoped the noble and learned Lord would understand that he was now rather speaking in aid of the regular course of procedure in that House, and not at all with reference to assisting the Bill. What appeared to him was that the House of Commons had prescribed the conditions under which this grant should be distributed, and it said that the Education Department should be advised by body A. The noble Earl proposed to add that body A should consist of something else than the House of Commons had already enacted. The result of that was that they would introduce a new qualification and a new condition to the circumstances in which the money might be distributed.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN asked if they were now laying down a precedent with regard to the power of that House? If that were so, it seemed to him they might have cause to regret it very greatly at no very distant time. If any supposition existed that by the withdrawal of these Amendments they were setting a precedent that that House was not competent to discuss, then he would take the opinion of their Lordships on the point.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY asked the Lord Chancellor whether he took the same view with regard to the publication of schemes?

The LORD CHANCELLOR: If I am right, I take it it applies to that as well.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: Then I do not move.

*The ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY asked for the indulgence of the House while he made a short personal explanation. On Tuesday last he spoke of the Vice President of the Council as having made a speech at Girton, in which he said that he hoped that the associations would be comprehensive, and not run on any sectarian lines. In commenting on this, he said he had some fear that the Vice President was a little tainted with the desire, which he supposed many of them must have seen lately in many excellent people, to undenominationalise the denominational schools. The Vice President had been good enough to write to him to say that he could not admit the inference he had drawn. It was quite true that he thought the associations might be undenominational, but that he had no desire whatever to apply the same principle to the managers of the individual schools. There, on the contrary, he thought it of very great importance to maintain their character as denominational schools, and not to interfere with that in the slightest degree. He felt it was his duty to explain to the House that this inference had been repudiated by the Vice President of the Council, and that he did not at all question that the right hon. Gentleman was not in the slightest degree inclined to rob denominational schools of their denominational character. At the same time, he thought it would be a serious thing indeed if the associations were undenominationalised. On Tuesday night Lord Spencer said that friction, jealousy, and suspicion would be found in the associations. It was easy to answer that, because there were a good many of such associations already at work. They were working with smoothness and ease, and were doing a great deal of good for the schools. He would not say Lord Spencer's description would not be true in a good many cases, if they compelled two denominations to associate their schools in one association. The business of the associations was to advise the Education Department upon the distribution of the money. For the purpose of advising the Department, it was absolutely necessary that they should ascertain what were the resources of the different schools. That was rather a delicate duty. It was not very easy to get people to be perfectly frank about all the resources upon which they could depend, and just as a Nonconformist manager would resent inquiries by a Church of England clergyman as to the pecuniary arrangements of his school, a Church of England clergyman would resent similar inquiries on the part of the Nonconformist manager. It would be well, therefore, if the Government would give them some assurance that they were not to begin what was undeniably an experiment by providing, as it were, fuel for a good deal of heat. For a long time to come, at any rate, it would be better that associations should be strictly denominational.

LORD HERSCHELL—who had given notice of his intention to move in Subsection (6) to leave out the word "may" ("The Education Department may"), in order to insert, instead thereof, the word "shall"—said that the Amendment would probably come within the objection raised by the Lord Chancellor. At the same time, he could not help saying that it was a great pity the Amendment was not made in the other House. The sub-section provided that—

> "The Education Department may require, as a condition of a school receiving a share of the aid grant, that the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the school shall be annually audited."

It was pointed out that that ought to be obligatory in all cases. Then it was suggested that the word "may" meant "shall," but after the decision of the House, there was no doubt that it was permissive, and not obligatory.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE) said he did not know whether the objection taken to the other Amendments would apply to this Amendment.

LORD HERSCHELL said he understood the Lord Chancellor to say that it would.

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE said that at all events, this Amendment, assuming it to be in order, was totally unnecessary. In the other House, one of the Law Officers had expressed the opinion that, as the duty of auditing the accounts of schools was conferred on the Department, it was obligatory on the Department to make use of it. The Government considered that where an audit was really necessary, it should take place. A similar duty was imposed on the Department by the Blind and Deaf Children Act, 1893, and a minute was passed by the Committee of Council on Education in which the following passage occurred:—

> "The accounts shall be audited annually either by a chartered accountant, a banker, or a bank manager, or a professional auditor."

That showed the way in which the Department had acted on similar instructions in a former Act, and it was the intention of the Department to act in a similar manner in this case.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 2,—

REPEAL OF 17s. 6d. LIMIT IN S. 19 OF 39 AND 40 VICT. C. 79 AS RESPECTS DAY SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

After the last day of March, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, the following words in section nineteen of the Elementary Education Act 1876, namely, "such grant shall not in any year be reduced by reason of its excess above the income of the school if the grant do not exceed the amount of seventeen shillings and sixpence per child in average attendance at the school during that year, but shall not exceed that amount per child, except by the same sum by which the income of the school derived from voluntary contributions, rates, school fees, endowments, or any source whatever other than the Parliamentary grant, exceeds the said amount per child, and" shall be repealed so far as they apply to day schools in England and Wales.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 3,—

EXEMPTION FROM RATES OF VOLUNTARY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

No person shall be assessed or rated to or for any local rate in respect of any land or buildings used exclusively or mainly for the purposes of the schoolrooms, offices, or playground of a Voluntary School, except to the extent of any profit derived by the managers of the school from the letting thereof.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said he had given notice of his intention to move the insertion of the following clause after Clause 3:—

"The Education Department shall in every year cause to be laid before both Houses of Parliament a report of the proceedings under this Act during the preceding year."

He would certainly have supposed that this clause might be inserted in the Bill, and he was informed that in the other House some promise was given that this Amendment might be inserted at another stage, meaning in another place. He could not conceive that the Government could have any objection to the clause on its merits. Unless it was contended that this was so completely a money Bill that not one word could be altered, he did not see why this clause could not be moved.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR did not think this Amendment was one of those to which he made any objection.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said that in that case he would move the insertion of the clause.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said he meant it did not come within his objection as to privilege; he did not mean that the Government acepted it.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY quite understood the noble and learned Lord to say it was not within his objection as to privilege. Of course, he could not tell that no objection would be made. That was for the noble Duke to tell them.

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE said he hardly considered it necessary that they should send the Bill back to the other House for the purpose of inserting this single Amendment. He could assure the noble Lord that it was the intention of the Committee of the Council to report fully the operations under the Act just in the same way as if it were compulsory.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY did not see that the Bill was so sacred that not one word of it could be altered. He was rather surprised, as the Government was not powerless in the other House. He could imagine a weak Government being afraid of sending Bills back, but in the circumstances he could not understand the action of the noble Duke. He had been led to believe that some such Amendment as this would be accepted, and should certainly take the sense of the Committee upon it. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE said he had not stated that it was of vital importance that no Amendment should be made in the Bill, or there would be any serious delay in sending it back; but some delay would take place, and it was of importance that the Bill should pass at the earliest possible moment. No money could be distributed to the Voluntary Schools—some of which stood in very great need of it—until the whole of the machinery to be set up under the Bill had been put into operation. It would be a work involving a considerable amount of time to form the associations, and when they were formed, they would have to frame their schemes for the distribution of the grants. He really would not take the responsibility of imposing any unnecessary delay. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY apprehended that the money was not voted yet, and until it was voted there would be nothing for the Department to distribute. Could it be supposed that the Voluntary Schools were in such a state of pauperism that it was impossible to get them to wait a few days? ["Hear, hear!"]

The Committee divided on the Amendment:—

CONTENTS	19
NOT-CONTENTS	65

CONTENTS.

Ripon, M.

Buckinghamshire, E.
Kimberley, E.
Russell, E.
Spencer, E.
Strafford, E.

Oxenbridge, V. [*Teller.*]

Aberdare, L.
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)

Coleridge, L.
Davey, L.
de Vesci, L. (*V. de Vesci.*)
Herschell, L.
Monkswell, L. [*Teller.*]
Reay, L.
Saye and Sele, L.
Thring, L.
Wandsworth, L.
Welby, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Abp.
Halsbury, L. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)
Cross, V. *L. Privy Seal.*)

Norfolk, D. (*E. Marshal.*)
Argyll, D.
Newcastle, D.
Portland, D.

Abercorn, M. (*D. Abercorn.*)
Lansdowne, M.

Camperdown, E.
Carnwath, E.
Clarendon, E.
Cowper, E.
Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensbury.*)
Feversham, E.
Leven and Melville, E.
Lucan, E.
Minto, E.
Selborne, E.
Stanhope, E.
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]

Bangor, V.
Knutsford, V.
Llandaff, V.
Templetown, V.

Ely, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Manchester, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Abinger, L.
Addington, L.
Aldenham, L.
Ampthill, L.
Arundell of Wardour, L.
Ashbourne, L.
Ashcombe, L.
Balfour, L.
Churchill, L. [*Teller.*]
Clinton, L.
Colchester, L.
Colville of Culross, L.
Cottesloe, L.
Fingall, L. (*E. Fingall.*)
Grimthorpe, L.
Hampton, L.
Harlech, L.
Harris, L.
Hylton, L.
James, L.
Lawrence, L.
Loch, L.
Manners, L.
Mendip, L. (*V. Clifden.*)
Norton, L.
Poltimore, L.
Ponsonby, L. (*E. Bessborough.*)
Ranfurly, L. (*E. Ranfurly.*)
Robartes, L.
Rookwood, L.
Rothschild, L.
Saltoun, L.
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Sudley, L. (*E. Arran.*)

Clause 4,—

DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

The expression "Voluntary School" means a public elementary day school not provided by a School Board;

Any reference to the number of scholars in schools means the number of scholars in average attendance as computed by the Education Department;

The expression "local rate" means a rate the proceeds of which are applicable to public local purposes, and which is leviable on the basis of an assessment in respect of the yearly value of property, and includes any sum which, though obtained in the first instance by a precept, certificate, or other instrument requiring payment from some authority or officer, is or can be ultimately raised out of a local rate as before defined;

Other expressions have the same meaning as in the Elementary Education Act, 1870 to 1893.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 5,—

EXTENT OF ACT AND SHORT TITLE.

(1.) This Act shall not extend to Scotland or Ireland.

(2.) This Act may be cited as the Voluntary Schools Act 1897.

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, in reply to the Archbishop of Canterbury, assured him that what had previously fallen from his Grace as to the constitution of the associations would be carefully considered and attended to by the Education Department. There was not the least desire that these associations should be constituted in any way that would give rise to distrust or to want of confidence on the part of the managers. The object of the Government was that the associations should be constituted on the initiative of the schools themselves, and it would be the desire of the Department not to impose conditions which they were unwilling to accept. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY wished to draw attention to what might be the consequences of not allowing any Amendments to be made, and of setting the precedent of proposing Bills in this shape, and sending them through the House of Commons without a single Amendment, and then bringing them up to that

House, where, from the nature of the Bill, no Amendments could be made. They could not fail to see that it might be possible for future Governments, acting on this precedent, to deprive that House entirely of any voice in the educational system of the country. Though for his part he did not deny that he shared in some respects the opinions expressed by the late Prime Minister, he at the same time could not conceive anything more disastrous than that as long as that House existed in any form as a revising chamber, it should be deprived of expressing an opinion upon the educational system of the country. He did not believe that there was anywhere a body of men more fitted than their Lordships, from their experience of affairs and their knowledge of the systems, to express an opinion on such a subject. He therefore could not help expressing regret that this Bill had been so conducted and so framed and so dealt with by the Government throughout, that Members of the House had been debarred practically from using the knowledge they possessed for the purpose of giving their advice with regard to a Bill of great importance which must affect the future of our whole educational system—introducing an era, he feared, of bitter and prolonged controversy on the whole subject. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said he could not help saying, as he unfortunately came within the noble Earl's observation, that he thought the noble Earl had a little confused the question by the use of a grand phrase like "our whole educational system." This was a Bill for the distribution of a sum of money which had been granted in aid of existing schools by the House of Commons, as to which he did not propose to enlarge at present. The House of Commons had always claimed the right of having unfettered discretion as to how it would appropriate the money it had granted. That might be right or wrong. That was the principle and that was the only precedent their lordships had established. As to Amendments, the noble Earl seemed to think that if a Bill was so well drawn that it required no Amendment, it was a very bad Bill, and that if it was drawn so that it could be amended it was a good Bill. [*Laughter.*] He did not concur in that. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said he differed fundamentally from the view taken by the noble and learned Lord with regard to the scope of this Bill. Could anyone who considered the Bill be so blind as not to see that this Bill was not merely a Bill giving a little money to this or that school, but disturbed for the first time in the most serious manner the old compromise of 1870, and raised the whole question of the educational system of this country; and if noble Lords opposite supposed that this matter was going to rest, or that there was not on the part of very large bodies of people in the country the greatest possible opposition to the Bill, they were entirely mistaken. There were large bodies of men who felt the greatest indignation at the passing of the Bill. The Bill stirred up controversy on the education of the country. Though it was called a Bill for the distribution of a little money, an important change in the educational system was tacked on to it.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said he agreed that the doctrine of the privilege of the House of Commons might be so pushed as to oust their Lordships' House from all legislative jurisdiction on Measures of the most important kind. If Measures greatly altering any system now prevailing were pushed through that House with the adjunct of money, on account of which alone their Lordships were not to touch them, that would be a most dangerous doctrine which he should join with his noble Friend opposite in resisting. But he could not look upon this Bill as a case in point. It was really almost exclusively a money Bill. On the face of it it was a Bill to give money assistance to certain schools, and he thought noble Lords opposite had very much exaggerated its scope when they said it altered the educational system of the country. He could not admit that the Bill was an invasion of the compromise of 1870. It was the intention of that compromise to maintain the Voluntary Schools, and noble Lords opposite had expressed no desire to abolish them. They were, however, in danger of being abolished from pecuniary necessity, and the object of the Bill was simply to secure that they should not be allowed to fall. There was nothing in the Bill but a fulfilment of the compromise of 1870. He thought exaggerated importance had been attached to the establishment of associations. It was a mere question of machinery. Parliament could no longer teach religion directly, and there were no other means of doing it than by giving assistance to denominational schools. That was the principle of the compromise of 1870, and there was nothing in this Bill contrary to that principle. Although his noble Friend assured the House that he was not opposed to Voluntary Schools, the whole spirit of his speech was strongly opposed to them. He attacked the clergy by name, and in the clause he proposed he intended to dictate to the various religious bodies the number of clergymen who should or should not be upon the management of schools. He was not himself, as he believed his hon. Friend was, a member of the Church of England; and if his noble Friend thought that he was in favour of what he called sacerdotalism—

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I never thought of accusing you of that.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: No, but he said that the system he was supporting was a system of sacerdotalism. The Church of England did not consist of the clergy only, but also of a great body of the laity, and he agreed that the laity should be largely represented; but surely it was the business of the laity to assert their own position in the government of their Church, and he had no doubt that they would succeed in getting a due share of influence. Where did the money come from? In a large degree from the laity, but he believed that the clergy had subscribed to their schools in a proportion to their incomes far greater than any other class, and he believed that the system of education would not have reached the comparative success it had now reached had it not been for the self-sacrificing zeal of the clergy. This Bill had adopted the principle of supporting Voluntary Schools for two great objects—one to secure, as it could not otherwise be secured, the religious education of the young; and the other to save to an enormous extent the immense burden that would be thrown on the ratepayers if the Voluntary Schools ceased to exist.

LORD HERSCHELL said that the noble Duke had insisted that the action taken on the Opposition Benches had been dictated by hostility to denominational schools. He could assure the noble Duke that that was not the case. They had never expressed the slightest desire that one penny less than the Bill gave should be given to Voluntary Schools, but they did assert that the compromise of 1870 was disturbed unless the money was given to Voluntary and Board Schools alike. The Bill appeared to them a distinct infringement of a Measure the principle of which was that the aid grant should be given irrespective of the question whether or not a school was a Voluntary or a Board School. They could not move in that House to make the grant available for Board Schools as well; and the only way in which they could act was the way in which they had acted; and he did not think that the noble Duke would dispute that that was a perfectly fair way of asserting an opinion on the subject. If they could have increased the grant, no doubt they would have taken that course. His contention was that, if the Government came to the conclusion that the grant to Voluntary Schools should be increased, the principle of the Act of 1870 should be maintained, and the grant should be extended to Board Schools as well.

*LORD NORTON contended that there was no claim that could possibly be made by the Board Schools for a grant such as was now being given to Voluntary Schools. The Board Schools had both Treasury and rate grants already. The whole cost of elementary and higher education was already given to Board Schools, and the claim of the Voluntary Schools was that only half was given to them. All that was now claimed by Voluntary Schools was that the additional cost of the higher education which had been added to the system of elementary education should be supported by the State. The position of the Voluntary Schools was that, if higher education was to be carried on in those schools, it must be at the expense of the Treasury, as in the Board Schools it was carried on by rates to which they contributed.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE) in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that the Act which it amended authorised Volunteer forces to borrow money to acquire land for military purposes, and the Public Works Loan Commissioners were empowered to advance the money. The present Bill authorised the borrowing of money to erect buildings for military purposes upon security of the land and buildings. He believed the Bill would be of great service to the Volunteers of this country.

EARL SPENCER asked whether money could be borrowed under the Bill for ranges, which would be so much wanted by the Volunteers in the near future?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE replied that the Act of 1892 gave power to borrow money to acquire land, and this Bill gave power to borrow money to erect buildings, which would include butts and the necessary appliances.

EARL SPENCER: Will it include fagots for butts?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE imagined it would include anything that came within the expression "buildings or permanent works." Whether the works the noble Earl referred to would be permanent he could not take upon himself to say.

Read 2^a (according to Order); and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

LAND COMMISSION.

*VISCOUNT TEMPLETOWN asked the Government whether Sub-Commissioners in Ireland had to pass any examination to test their qualifications for fixing judicial rents? He said that, according to the Report of the Irish Land Commission to March 1896, he found that the entire number of cases in which judicial rents had been fixed was 303,243; the old rent being £6,313,221, and the judicial rent £4,993,514, the percentage of reduction being 20·9. In round numbers, the amount of rents which would be liable to be fixed under the same head during the second statutory term was about five millions. Judging by the reductions that had come under his notice, more especially those to which he referred on the 17th of July last, it was difficult to suppose that the reductions under the second term would average less than those under the first terms. Over a million and a-quarter was taken off the rents of Irish landlords last term, but it looked, by the reductions that were now taking place, as if a still larger sum was going to be taken off the reduced rental. Those figures would, he thought, prove that very great importance attached to the qualifications of those intrusted with the duties of lay assistant Commissioners, and that Irish landlords were entitled to ask that Sub-Commissioners should be men who had satisfied competent examiners that they were perfectly qualified for their duties; because, in some cases, he might say in many cases, the reductions at present being made meant nothing less than absolute ruin to Irish landlords. Not only were landlords entitled to demand that, but all those who were in any way connected with the land. Surely not only those who paid the rent, but the labourer who tilled the soil was entitled to demand it, for when reductions had reached a certain point it meant that the labourers would either be obliged to seek employment from the tenants, who were in many cases converting arable into pasture land to save their labour, or they would be forced to emigrate, as large numbers had already done. The reductions of rents below a certain point, which, if it had not been reached at the present rate of reductions very soon must be, would have exactly the opposite effect also to that to which Mr. Gladstone looked forward in 1870, when, in speaking on the Land Act of that date, he said:—

> "But the only great boon—and it is a great boon—which it is in the power of the Legislature to give to the agricultural labourer in Ireland is to increase the demand for his labour, and by imparting a stimulus to the agriculture of the country to insure its requiring more strong arms to carry it on, and thereby to bring more bidders into the market for those arms, and raise the natural and legitimate price of their labour."

Then there was another class deeply interested in this matter—he referred to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. He would not now go into a calculation of what amount of income tax had been lost to the Exchequer since the Land Act of 1870, due to the Irish Land Acts; but whatever the amount, it had never been accounted for. Then there were also the motgagees, the various life insurance companies, and other societies who had money invested in Irish land, and the various chargeants, some of whom were already in receipt of relief from the Irish Distressed Ladies Fund. But great as those claims undoubtedly were, there was another claim, that of justice, which could not be long disregarded. He contended that the Irish landlords were at this moment, speaking generally, at the mercy of the lay Assistant Commissioners. When Mr. Dowse, the Solicitor General for Ireland, was speaking on the Land Bill of 1870, what did he say? He laid it down that "No man ought to be left at the mercy of his neighbour, no matter how just that neighbour might be." If it was wrong for the tenants, was it not wrong for the landlord to be in that position? He would preface his remarks on the Return lately issued to Parliament with a reference to a work on Rent Fixing. It was laid down in Pardon's book on Land Valuation for Rent, "That there can be no doubt that to be a good judge of land and qualified to appraise the conditions attaching to a holding as well as the soil itself, one must have a taste for agriculture, have had experience, be a keen observer, and possess a judicial mind." And then it was indicated what a valuer should know as regards the effects of science on agriculture, freights, and effect of imports of cattle. He should have a thorough knowledge of at least seven soils and their texture and improvability. He must have a knowledge of plants, indicating the quality of soils, and must be equally familiar with the value of grass lands, mountain and bog lands, while he must know how to allow for proximity to or remoteness of a farm from towns, railway stations, etc. Many other things were named that he should thoroughly understand. If he was rightly informed, a man could not be appointed as messenger in a Dublin public office without passing some sort of examination, yet, if he was not mistaken, no examination whatever was asked of the Sub-Commissioners who had five millions of rents at their mercy, and therefore the fortunes of goodness knew how many thousands of men, women, and children. He now came to the Return of the 5th March 1897, giving the names and other information about the lay Assistant Commissioners holding office on January 25th 1897. Out of 73 Sub-Commissioners three only were owners, and they owned respectively 300, 200, and 60 acres; two were agents, one farming only 70 acres, and the rest were tenants. Out of the 73, under the heading of "What experience in valuing, mapping, surveying?" he found the answers were in four cases "None;" in seven cases, "Studied at college;" in three cases, "Studied at school;" one case, "Chiefly self-taught;" one "Has fairly good knowledge;" one "Has assisted father;" four "Have studied surveying and mapping;" one "Has some experience in valuing, none in mapping;" one is a "farmer;" one "Has experience in mapping and scaling," but apparently none in valuing, and in seven cases no answer was given at all. He would refer to one or two cases. One permanent lay Commissioner was educated at Moy and Dungannon; he farmed 200 acres as tenant, but had no other experience of agriculture, and his experience in mapping and surveying and valuing was valuing and mapping at school. Another permanent lay Commissioner was educated at Dublin Academic Institution, farmed 60 to 70 acres as tenant, and his other experience in agriculture consisted of "Visiting numerous farms in various counties;" his experience in valuing, mapping, and surveying was "Chiefly self-taught." He would refer to the last case, that of a temporary lay Assistant Commissioner. He was educated at Omagh Classical School, and private tuition. He farmed 205 acres as tenant; other experience of agriculture, "Member of Tyrone Farming Society;" experience of valuing, mapping, and surveying, "None." His criticism of the qualifications would, he hoped, have made it clear that there was no standard of qualification, or past employment, or experience which had to be possessed by a lay Sub-Commissioner. He did not for a single instant wish to press hardly on any particular cases, but he could not help expressing deep concern that five millions of Irish rents were at the mercy of men of whom the Government said that some of them had no experience in valuing, mapping, or surveying, and of others that their experience under these heads, as represented by the Return, could not be stated at all.

THE EARL of RANFURLY said the official answer was that the gentlemen appointed to the position of assistant Land Commissioners in Ireland were not required to pass a formal examination before being appointed. The utmost pains however, were taken to ascertain their qualifications for the functions they were called upon to discharge. ["Hear, hear!"] He would like to add that the Chief Secretary himself interviewed every one of the new Sub-Commissioners who had been appointed, besides many hundreds of others who made application. He had to choose from a large number and he gave much time and patience and the best of his ability to the selection. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE EARL of ARRAN asked if the Chief Secretary himself had any knowledge of land?

THE EARL of RANFURLY was afraid he could not answer that question.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, in moving the adjournment of the House, said it might be convenient if he made known the arrangement it was proposed to make as to the business. As he had already said, he intended to move the Third Reading of the Voluntary Schools Bill on Monday. It was also proposed to Read a Second time the Military Works Bill, which would come from the Commons, on Monday; and if there was no objection, as he understood there would not be, it would be passed through its remaining stages on Tuesday. There would be a Royal Commission on Thursday for receiving the Royal assent to several Bills, after which it would be proposed that the House should adjourn until Monday, May 3. ["Hear, hear!"]

House Adjourned at Twenty Minutes past Six o'Clock, to Monday next, a Quarter before Eleven o'Clock.

Viscount Templetown.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 2nd April 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

Read the Third time, and passed.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (INCREASED GRANT).

Committee to consider the authorising of payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an increase to the Grant payable to School Boards, under the proviso of Section ninety-seven of The Elementary Education Act, 1870 (Queen's Recommendation signified), on Monday next.—*(Sir John Gorst.)*

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE (ADVANCES).

Committee to consider the authorising of the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums as may be required for the purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of a Site for Public Offices in or near Whitehall, and for other purposes connected therewith, and of authorising the Treasury to borrow money by means of terminable annuities, such annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament and, if those moneys are insufficient out of the Consolidated Fund (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—*(Mr. Hanbury.)*

ARMY (DISEASE).

Address for "Return of the amount of all classes of Venereal Disease (including simple Venereal Returns) for all stations where the Act was in force from 1864 to 1883." "And, similar Return for the same stations from 1886 to 1895."—*(Major Rasch.)*

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that a meeting of the Castleblaney Postmen's Federation was held on the 24th inst. to protest against the Report of the Tweedmouth Commission recommending the abolishing of Christmas boxes without any equivalent compensation to postmen; and whether he will give this grievance of the postmen his consideration?

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if the long-established practice of postmen receiving gifts at Christmas time, under the name of Christmas boxes, is going to be abolished, in accordance with the recommendation of the Inter-Departmental Committee, what scale of compensation it is intended postmen shall receive in lieu of this deprivation?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): The Postmaster General is not aware of the meeting referred to by the hon. Member for South Monaghan. There seems to be some misapprehension with regard to the views of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee on the question of Christmas boxes for postmen. The Committee recommended, not that postmen should be prohibited from receiving such gifts, but that the Post Office should adopt a general rule for all postmen against asking for them, somewhat similar to that now in force in the provinces. This recommendation will be acted upon.

Mr. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the Resolution recently passed by the Belfast Branch of the Postmen's Federation, in condemnation of the recommendations of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, and in protest against the want of recognition of the demands of the postmen; and whether their claims for better treatment will be reconsidered?

Mr. HANBURY: The Resolution from Belfast has not come under notice, but copies in almost identical terms of resolutions on the subject referred to have been received from numerous towns throughout the Kingdom, and have been returned to the senders with an intimation that it has never been the practice for the Postmaster General to receive representations from the staff in the form of "Resolutions." These claims have been fully considered by a very competent Committee, and it is not proposed to reconsider their recommendations, which have been approved both by the Post Office and the Treasury.

Mr. McCARTAN asked in what form the Postmaster General received representations if not in the form of resolutions?

Mr. HANBURY: I cannot say in what form he will receive representations, but he will not receive them in the form of Resolutions.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many police pensioners there are in Ireland who joined the constabulary force under the Act of 1847; were these men entitled on retirement from the force to receive their full pay for pension, and why did they not so receive their full pay; did a law adviser to the Crown give the opinion that there was nothing in the existing condition of the law to prevent the Government, if so minded, giving these men their full pay for pension; did the officers who joined under the Act of 1847, on retiring from the force, receive their full pay; and, will he have this matter fully investigated, in order that justice may be done to the surviving remnant of these police pensioners?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): It would not be possible to give the information desired by the first question without an expenditure of much labour and time, which could serve no useful purpose. The amount of pension in each case is determined by length of service and conduct, and no right to full pay on retirement is conferred by the Act of 1847. The Lord Lieutenant has always, upon the advice of his Law Officers, exercised the power under the Act of sanctioning pensions calculated upon length of service and conduct, and the amount of pension in the cases of officers retired under the Act depended, as in the case of men, upon precisely the same conditions. The matter has already been fully investigated, and I see no sufficient reason for reopening it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain on what grounds Mr. Milling, D.I., R.I.C., Derrygonnelly, county Fermanagh, withdrew, on his own responsibility, at Belleek Petty Sessions, on 8th December last, a charged preferred by the police against Mr. R. N. Barron, Solicitor, Ballyshannon, Registrar of Donegal, of discharging firearms on the public road, although several witnesses were ready to prove the offence; and will Mr. Milling be directed to again take up the prosecution?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The charge against Mr. Barron was one of discharging a firearm at a bird off the public road. The solicitor for the defendant asked the magistrates to dismiss the case, and the magistrates having suggested its withdrawal, the district Inspector offered no objection and the case was accordingly dropped. There seems to be no sufficient reason for reopening the proceedings.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the amount of the economies effected by the stoppage of recruiting in the Royal Irish Constabulary and the reduction which has taken place already in that force, and how much will be the amount of these economies in the future; and whether, in accordance with his reiterated promise that Irish savings will be credited to Ireland, the amount of the savings in the matter of the Royal Irish Constabulary will be placed to an Irish account?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): My promise, as I have explained, related to judicial salaries. But I may add that any saving shown by the Estimates on the Irish Constabulary Vote is far more than counterbalanced by increases on other Irish Votes.

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if Constable Lester, of the County Leitrim force, who was found, on inquiry by the Inspector General, to have written a letter in the name of the sergeant of his station for the purpose of evading a debt due to a Dublin cycle firm, will be proceeded against criminally for a breach of the ordinary law, against acts committed with intent to defraud?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: There is no evidence that the constable wrote the letter referred to, and I have already stated that if the cycle firm desire to prefer a criminal charge against him, every assistance will be afforded to them to have it fully investigated by the magistrates.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the *Puffin* lightship was docked at Passage West, Cork, and what dock she was repaired at; whether he is aware that it is stated that the *Puffin* was not repaired at Passage West; and whether the lightship *Stars* was docked and repaired at Passage West, and whether her condition after repairing was perfectly seaworthy?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): I should be much obliged if the hon. Member would not put, for I do not think I can properly answer, questions with regard to the *Puffin*, pending the Inquiry which is being held. The Commissioners of Lights inform me that the lightship *Stars* was docked and repaired at Passage West in 1895, and her condition was rendered perfectly seaworthy.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the general convenience, he will have the Inquiry held in Queenstown or in Cork; rather than in Dublin?

Mr. RITCHIE: The inquiry is now going on.

Captain DONELAN: I understand it has been adjourned until the *Puffin* is raised.

Mr. RITCHIE: No, no.

LAND COMMISSION.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) what is the average time occupied between the hearing of a fair rent application and the fixing of a judicial rent; (2) when did the Dublin Sub-Commission of 1897 begin their sittings, and have any fair rents since been fixed; (3) have gales of rent at the former rate since then become payable on which farmers have been sued, and has the head of Dublin Sub-Commission since sat in Munster; and (4) can any arrangement be made by which speedier decision can be given in County Dublin?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The interval between the hearing and the decision of fair rent applications may be one of two or three weeks, and may be considerably longer, depending upon the number of cases heard at a sitting, the distance between the holdings, facilities of locomotion, weather, and other circumstances. The sitting of the Sub-Commission Court in Dublin took place on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th February and was continued on the 16th March. The hearing of the list, containing 74 cases, has been completed, and decisions have been announced in 59 of these cases. The Land Commission have no information as to the first part of the first paragraph. The Chairman of the Sub-Commission referred to has since sat to hear cases in Munster. I am assured that no undue delay has occurred in announcing the decisions in these cases.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland can he state when the next Land Sub-Commission Court will sit in Cavan?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: A Sub-Commission Court sat in the town of Cavan early in February last. No date has yet been fixed for the next sitting in that town.

Mr. J. J. SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the Irish Land Commission, in collecting and preparing their returns of the average prices of agricultural produce in Ireland, take steps to ascertain the prices of cattle and farm produce which are realised at the fairs and markets in the chief towns of all the counties in Ireland; if not, what are the names of the towns and cities from which they obtain returns; (2) who collects the information, and how often; (3) how, for instance, is the average price of yearling cattle arrived at with regard to any particular fair, if a varying number of that class of cattle are sold at various prices ranging from, say, £3 to £6; (4) is it claimed by the Irish Land Commission that their returns are approximately accurate; and (5), if the number of any class of cattle or proportion of farm produce sold at the various prices is not ascertained approximately, in what way is the approximation to accuracy, if claimed, secured?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The reply to the first Question is in the affirmative, as regards the prices of cattle. Market transactions in wheat, oats, barley, eggs, butter and potatoes are reported by the Inland Revenue Officers at Limerick, Cork, Sligo, Belfast, Waterford, Dublin, Derry, and Galway. Particulars as to flax and grass seeds are furnished by the same officers at Armagh, Cookstown, Ballymena and Clones. Information as to cattle is obtained from the Market Authorities of Dublin, Belfast and Cork, and from other persons throughout the country. As regards the third Question, the hon. Member will observe, on reference to the Land Commission Returns, that store cattle are classified according to quality, and the average prices of cattle of a specified age and class are calculated by dividing the gross value of the stock sold by the number sold. Every possible care is taken by the Commissioners to obtain accurate reports and returns, and their calculation of averages compiled from these returns is strictly accurate. The last Question requires no further answer.

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the conduct of certain landlords in the county of Down, who decline to appear or to present witnesses before the Sub-Commission on the hearing of fair rent applications, and afterwards appeal from the decision of the Sub-Commission to the Chief Commission and there produce witnesses, making the Chief Commission a court of first instance for them; and whether, seeing that in the ordinary appeals from the county court to the assizes where no witnesses had been produced by the appellants at the court below the Judges invariably send them back for hearing to the court of first instance, it is the intention of the Chief Commission in similar cases to remit their cases to the Sub-Commission for a full hearing?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The attention of the Land Commissioners has not been called to the conduct of any landlord in the county of Down declining to appear or present witnesses before a Sub-Commission. A complaint was made of such conduct on the part of a landlord in the county of Armagh in reference to certain cases on his estate, but as these cases have not yet been decided, the Land Commissioners are unable to make any statement in reference to them.

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what are the names of the Lay Assistant Commissioners included in the orders of delegation made by the Irish Land Commission at present in force for the provinces of Ulster and Munster?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The number of Lay Assistant Commissioners now at work in the province of Ulster and Munster is 46; namely, 39 in Ulster, and 7 in Munster. A list of the names of these gentlemen has been forwarded to the hon. Member.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Tyrone (Mr. P. C. DOOGAN), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is in a position to explain why the farm of James Doyle, of Derrychrin Drumaney Arboe, county Tyrone, has not yet been visited with a view to fixing a fair rent, although his case was heard in the Land Court, Cookstown, before Commissioners Messrs. Howlin and Edge on the 25th February last?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The holding in question has not yet been visited, because Mr. Howlin has been engaged in the inspection of other cases previously heard.

MR. SHEE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, inasmuch as all owners of land in Ireland who have purchased their holdings under the Land Purchase Acts since 1891 have been relieved of the expense of procuring legal assistance for the purpose of having their titles registered under The Local Registration of Titles (Ireland) Act, 1891, and have had the registration of their titles carried out for them by the Irish Land Commission, and that the expense of legal assistance for the registration of the title to a holding however small is at least £2 2s., according to scale, whilst those owners the purchase of whose holdings was completed before 1891 have to bear the expense of procuring legal assistance to register their titles, steps will be taken to have the registration of the titles to their holdings of purchasers before 1891 completed for them without expense, as in the case of those who purchased since 1891?

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Member refers to a point which was settled in 1892 after very careful consideration between the Treasury and the Land Commission. Owners the purchase of whose holdings was completed before 31st December, 1891, have their titles registered without payment of any Government fee, provided that they applied for registration within the period of a year allowed by Section 22 (2) of the Act. But they differ from tenants purchasing since 1891, because the latter registered their title at the same time as the transfer of the holding took place, whereas in the case of earlier purchasers the interval between the transfer and the registration afforded occasion for legal difficulties to have arisen in connection with the title.

MR. SHEE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that he has not answered the Question on the Paper at all?

MR. HANBURY: No, I am aware that I answered it very completely.

MR. SHEE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that my Question referred to the lawyer's fees?

MR. HANBURY: I am perfectly aware of that, and the whole of the last paragraph of my answer refers to the lawyer's fees.

DR. FOX (King's County, Tullamore): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that 50 tenants in the Tullamore district of King's County applied to have fair rents fixed, and that only one application was heard; and, when the next Land Commission will sit in that district?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: There are 34, not 50, cases pending from the

Tullamore Union. The actual date of hearing the cases listed has not yet been announced by the Chairman of the Sub-Commission.

Mr. G. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the recent decisions given by Assistant Land Commissioners of cases heard at Omagh cover 31 cases only, leaving a large number still undecided; if he will state the cause of delay in arriving at a decision in the case of Patrick Morris, heard at Omagh in December and visited the same week; and, will he also state when decisions will be made known of cases heard several months ago at Castlederg, Strabane, and Cookstown?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Judgment has been given in 36 of the cases referred to, and the Chairman of the Sub-Commission expects to announce the decisions in the majority of the remaining cases to-morrow. The case of Patrick Morris was heard on the 1st March, and not in December as stated. The Sub-Commission has not yet been able to announce its decision in his case. Decisions were delivered on Wednesday in a large number of the cases heard at Castlederg and Strabane, and the decisions will be made known to-day in the remainder of these cases. The Sub-Commission has not yet given its decisions in the Cookstown cases, 28 of which were heard on the 25th February last.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how it is that the chief Land Commission can raise the rent in as many cases in the course of a single day as the Sub-Commission can hear in three months. [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CLERKSHIP OF PETTY SESSIONS (IRELAND).

Mr. S. YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether it is the practice to allow magistrates in Ireland, appointed pending an election for the clerkship of petty sessions in their district, to vote for any candidate at such election; (2) whether he is aware that there is now a vacancy in the petty sessions clerkship of Bailieborough, county Cavan; and (3) whether he will take steps to prevent any magistrate appointed for that district, pending the election, from voting for any of the candidates for the office?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The practice is correctly stated in the first Question. There is no power to prevent a magistrate from recording his vote at the election referred to, if he resides in the petty sessions district, or if, residing out of the district, he has complied with the regulations respecting attendances at petty sessions.

SUNDAY POSTAL DELIVERY (CO. CAVAN).

Mr. YOUNG: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he has received a copy of a memorial sent to the Postmaster General in reference to a Sunday delivery, which is asked for under peculiar circumstances, at Lievenenass and Kill, near Cootehill, county Cavan; and whether he can see his way to grant the prayer of the memorial?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has received the memorial referred to. Under regulations of long standing an application for a Sunday delivery in a rural district can only be granted if made by persons receiving not less than two-thirds of the correspondence affected. Returns of the correspondence for the district referred to are now being taken, in order to ascertain whether the memorialists receive the necessary proportion of the letters, and the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

TELEGRAPHIC ERRORS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, (1) what compensation or redress is allowed to the sender of a telegram when heavy loss follows its non-delivery or blunders in translation on the part of telegraph officials; (2) whether in the case of complaint No. 72,852, where serious notice has been taken of such an offence, the mere refund of the amount paid is the utmost satisfaction the sender of the telegram can legally claim; and (3) whether a sender of a telegram can by a small extra payment insure its delivery, as in the case of a registered letter?

MR. HANBURY: No compensation or redress is allowed. The Postmaster General is not liable for any loss or damage which may be incurred by reason or on account of any mistake or default in the transmission or delivery of a telegram. Notice of this is given on the back of the telegram form used by the public, and also in the Post Office Guide. In the case referred to by the hon. Member, the sender of the telegram has no legal claim to the refundment of the amount paid for the telegram, but it is the practice of the Post Office to repay the amount in such cases, and that is the utmost the Department can do. The third paragraph of the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) asked whether it was not the fact that, upon payment of a small extra sum, the sender of a telegram could have it repeated from the other end in order to see whether it had been correctly transmitted?

MR. HANBURY: That is so.

IRISH TEACHERS' RESIDENCE ACT.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that grave discontent exists amongst the Irish National Teachers on the question of the Irish Teachers' Residence Act; and (2) whether it would be possible to introduce an amending Act to increase the loan for erection of residence to £500, extend the time for repayment to 61 years, and exempt the buildings from taxation during the period of repayment?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Resolutions have been passed from time to time by National Teachers' Associations expressing the opinion that the Act is too restricted. As regards the second Question, I cannot at present add anything to my reply to the Question on the same subject put by my hon. Friend the hon. Member for South Londonderry on the 23rd February last.

WORKMISTRESSES (IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) can he state when the salaries of workmistresses in Irish National Schools were last augmented; (2) whether the course of examination for the position was sensibly raised in 1893; and (3) whether workmistresses are the only public servants in the teaching profession whose stipends were not increased by the Act of 1892?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The salaries of workmistresses were increased in the year 1885. The Commissioners of National Education cannot admit that the course of examination was made more difficult as alleged. The instructions issued at the time were not designed to extend the course or to render it more difficult. The fact appears to be as stated in the third Question.

COOLGREANEY ESTATE (IRELAND).

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if proposals for a settlement have been made to their landlord by the tenants on the Coolgreaney estate; and if he has any hopes of an arrangement being arrived at?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Twelve tenants have already been reinstated in their former holdings on this estate at the old rent. I am not aware whether any proposals with a view to settlement have been made by the ex-tenants who are still out of possession. I should rejoice if a settlement, where practicable, were arrived at, and sincerely hope the parties may see their way to come to terms.

REVENUE RETURNS (IRELAND).

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the annual amount paid by Ireland in respect of tithe rent-charge, quit rent, and Crown rent; and what portion of these payments is included in the Treasury Returns of Irish Revenue?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Tithe rent-charge, so far as payable to the Land Commission, forms part of the "Church Fund," which, being a local Irish fund, is not included in the "financial relations figures. Crown rent and quit rent, so far as payable to the Commissioners of Woods, are included in the "financial relations" returns, and credited to Ireland. They amount to about £36,000 per annum.

DISTRESS (IRELAND).

Mr. SHEE: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the provisions of the Acts 59 Geo. III., cap. 12, section 12; 1 and 2 Wm. IV., cap. 42, and 5 and 6 Wm. IV., cap. 69, and also of the Acts 43 Eliz., cap. 2, section 1, and 4 and 5 Wm. IV., cap. 76, empowering Boards of Guardians to take or hire land for the purpose of setting the poor to work for wages, and to employ certain persons for wages, respectively, apply to Ireland; if not, whether there are any corresponding enactments which give such Boards of Guardians these powers; and whether, if Irish Boards of Guardians have no such powers, steps will be taken, in view of the Report referred to and of the admittedly extremely prevalent distress in Ireland from want of employment, to confer them?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): None of the Statutes mentioned apply to Ireland, nor are any powers similar to those conferred by them given by the Irish Poor Law Acts to buy or hire land for the purpose of setting to work thereon any persons who are not inmates of a workhouse. It is not intended to introduce any legislation with this specific object.

POST OFFICE SERVANT (DISMISSAL.)

Viscount VALENTIA (Oxford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the case of Charles Henry Wade who (after 27 years' service as a civil servant) was dismissed from the Post Office, thereby forfeiting all benefits for which he had contributed out of his pay, has been reconsidered; and, if so, whether the Postmaster General has, considering the length of Wade's service, his previous good conduct, and the fact that the offence of which he was guilty was the result of a deception on the part of a friend, any intention of rescinding Wade's dismissal?

Mr. HANBURY: Mr. Wade has had a very unsatisfactory record at the Post Office, and has been treated with great forbearance. He was first tried in the Savings Bank Department, and when removed from there, the Postmaster-General decided that he was never again to be employed in that Department. He was then tried in the Postal Stores Department, the Controller of which reported that he was slow at his work, and quite unsuited for any position of trust or responsibility. He was finally tried in the Receiver and Accountant General's Office, where he failed in two branches, and was on his final trial in the branch where he used his official position to obtain cash for the cheque referred to, contrary to the rule of the Department. On two occasions during his career his increment was suspended in consequence of his unsatisfactory conduct. In view of all these circumstances, the Postmaster General, after careful consideration, came to the conclusion that Mr. Wade was not an officer whose continued employment in the Department was desirable or possible, and called upon him to resign. I shall be very glad to show the noble Lord a complete record of Mr. Wade's service.

LABOURERS' ACTS (IRELAND).

Mr. SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in issuing loans to the Limerick and Tipperary Poor Law Unions in connection with the schemes under the Labourers' Acts recently embodied in Provisional Orders; and whether representations have been made by the guardians of these unions of their desire to obtain loans without delay, with a view to being enabled to have the plots of land taken under the Provisional Orders fenced forthwith so that they may be let and cultivated during the present spring?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: As regards the Tipperary Union, an instalment of the Loan was advanced to the Guardians in November last. The applications for sanction to loans in the case of the Limerick Union were only received on the 19th March, though the forms for the purpose were sent to the guardians a month previously. The applications will be dealt with as quickly as possible, but no instalment can be advanced until Treasury sanction has been obtained and the usual mortgage deeds completed.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND).

Mr. SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether, in view of the friction which has arisen between many of the Boards of Governors of Irish Lunatic Asylums and the Board of Control, he will take some steps, by legislation or otherwise, to amend or remodel the constitution of the Board of Control so as to render it directly representative of the ratepayers; (2) whether he is aware that the Lunacy Commissioners in England act in a similar capacity to the Irish Board of Control, but, nevertheless, claim no power of veto such as the latter body claims; and (3) whether the Governors of Irish Lunatic Asylums are allowed any discretion as to the extent and nature of the accommodation they may provide for inmates?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The whole question of Lunacy administration in Ireland is one requiring attention, though I cannot promise that I shall be able to deal with the matter in the immediate future. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the Lunacy administration in England to answer the second Question. As regards the third Question, the fullest opportunity is always afforded the local authorities to submit their views on any plans proposed for improved or increased accommodation, and these views receive the most careful consideration of the Board of Control, with the utmost desire to adopt them, so far as they may be found practicable.

TROOPS IN INDIA (SUPPLY OF BEER).

Mr. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government contemplate remitting the present Excise Duty on beer brewed in India for the use of the troops; and, if so, whether it is intended to make a corresponding remission of Customs Duty on beer imported into India from this country for the use of the troops?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): The contracts for the supply of Indian beer to the troops in India terminate next year. I have not at present received any report tending to show that fresh arrangements are contemplated, but the attention of the Government of India will be drawn to my hon. Friend's Question.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the Government intend to introduce this Session a Bill for the amendment of the educational system in Ireland; (2) whether manual, agricultural, and technical instruction will be provided; and (3) whether the rate will be defined to pay the expenses of enforcing compulsory attendance?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have nothing to add to the answer given by me to the hon. Member on the 11th February on the subject of the first and third Questions. As regards the second Question, a Commission is now sitting to consider the question of the application of the manual and practical instruction to the system of primary education in Ireland.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, Harbour (Mr. T. Harrington), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether manual instruction and agriculture are on the programme of the industrial schools in Ireland, and in how many of them were examinations held on these subjects in 1896?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Manual instruction in various trades and handicraft is given in industrial schools in Ireland, and agriculture is taught in such schools as have farms attached to them. None of the pupils of industrial schools, enrolled in national schools, were examined in 1895 in either practical agriculture or handicraft at the examinations conducted by the National Board of Education. The statistics for 1896 are not yet available.

Mr. F. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is it consistent with the regulations of the National Board of Education in Ireland that an assistant teacher or monitor should take part in making a demand of possession from a tenant converted into a caretaker under Section 7 of the Land Act, 1887, with a view to eviction?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Commissioners are unable to give a definite reply to this abstract question. If the hon. Member will state the circumstances and facts of the particular case out of which the question arises, further inquiry will be made.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS (IRELAND).

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the remaining laws against the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland which the Government have declared obsolete along with the laws affecting Freemasons, are to be included in the Statute Law Revision Bills for repeal as "spent" Acts?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: This is a matter for the consideration of the Statute Law Revision Committee, with whom, so far as I am aware, the initiative lies. I believe the hon. Member is a member of this Committee, and, if so, he can bring this subject before them.

CHANNEL FLEET.

Mr. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Amiralty whether, in making arrangements for the Summer cruise of the Fleet in the North, he will give favourable consideration to the Ports of Cromarty and Kirkwall as places of call?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): In making arrangements for the cruise of the Channel Fleet the Admiralty cannot be guided by political considerations or by Parliamentary influence. Naval consideration alone must determine the nature of the cruise.

RECRUITS (3rd BATTALION LIGHT INFANTRY AND SCOTTISH RIFLES).

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War how many recruits are attached to the 3rd Battalion Light Infantry and Scottish Rifles for the current year; whether it is contemplated to send these men to Aldershot for their preliminary drill and musketry, and will he consider the advisability of attaching them for the training of 1897 to the 4th Battalions of each regiment at Lanark; and can he inform the House what advantages are to be gained by sending such recruits to Aldershot, instead of training them at Lanark?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): These Militia battalions contain 134 and 151 recruits respectively, and these men, who have been drilled on enlistment for 49 days, will have their 14 days' musketry training at Aldershot. It is considered when battalions are sent to Aldershot for training, that it is of great advantage to the recruits to carry out their course there under the supervision of the District Inspector of Musketry.

Mr. J. WILSON (Falkirk) asked whether it would not be equally efficacious, if not more economical, to attach these men to the 4th Battalions of each regiment at Lanark?

Mr. BRODRICK said they had to consider military efficiency as well as economy.

MILITARY CAMP (SCOTLAND).

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, with a view to the defence of North Britain, he will consider the advisability of establishing a camp similar to that of Aldershot at some central point, such as Carstairs, in Lanarkshire, where the troops of the northern districts could be conveniently mobilised?

Mr. BRODRICK said he had answered this identical Question in reply to another hon. Member on a former occasion.

Mr. J. WILSON (Falkirk) asked if he might hear what the former answer was?

Mr. BRODRICK said he was afraid he could not trouble the House a second day running with a long reply to the same Question.

Mr. J. WILSON (Falkirk) said this was not the same Question at all.

Mr. BRODRICK said he had answered this precise Question yesterday.

Mr. T. M. HEALY was understood to ask whether the Government would establish a camp in Crete? [*Laughter.*]

STRABANE (CROWN SESSIONS).

Mr. C. H. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he received some time ago a memorial from the grand and petty jurors and principal inhabitants of the barony of Lower Strabane, in the county of Tyrone, pointing out that Strabane was the most populous town in the county, and complaining of the great inconvenience and pecuniary loss occasioned to the memorialists by the Quarterly Crown Sessions for the division of Strabane being held at Omagh, which is a considerable distance off; whether he is aware that up to the year 1876 Crown Sessions were always held at Strabane for that division, and the principal reason for their discontinuance was the fact that the county goal was then at Omagh; whether that reason has now ceased to exist, all the county prisoners being now committed to Londonderry Gaol, to which Strabane is much nearer than Omagh; and whether any steps have been taken to bring the said memorial under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The memorial in question has been received. It is a fact that Crown Sessions were held in Strabane till the year 1886, but I am not aware of the reasons which influenced the Privy Council in transferring them to Omagh. Prisoners are now committed to Londonderry Prison from the district of Strabane, which is nearer to Londonderry than is Omagh. The memorial has been referred by the Lord Lieutenant in Council to a Committee, who will meet at an early date for its consideration.

DUBLIN ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.

Mr. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he was waited upon on Monday last by the chairmen of the several townships through which the Dublin Electric Tramways pass relative to granting permission to extend the rate of speed; and if so, with what result?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon): The Board of Trade are being legally advised as to whether they have any power to raise the speed above the limit imposed by the Special Act, namely eight miles an hour.

PARCEL POST (GREAT BRITAIN AND BRAZIL).

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postal authorities would take the necessary steps to establish, in the interest of British manufacturers and merchants, and of the people of Brazil at the same time, a parcel post between Great Britain and the Brazils?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is anxious for the establishment of a parcel post with Brazil, and proposals on the subject have been made to the Government of that country, but have hitherto been declined.

CRETE.

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Turkish Government is regularly paying its soldiers and civil servants in the island of Crete for the services they are rendering there; and, in the event of Turkey not paying, are we under any financial responsibilities for the Government of Crete?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): Her Majesty's Government have no information as to the payment of the Turkish officials and troops in Crete. It is not a matter for which this country is responsible, financially or otherwise.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Mussulmans rescued at Candanos have been armed by the Turks at Canea, and sent out to fight the insurgents; and, if that be the case, whether such action is in contravention of the written undertaking signed by the British Consul and the Commanders of the European warships at Canea?

Mr. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Question 60, namely, whether Colonel Vassos, the Greek

Commander in Crete, has addressed a protest to the Admirals of the Great Powers, in which the following statements are made; that it was through his action that the beseiged Turks of Candanos were enabled to proceed in safety to Canea; that conditions with respect to these Turks were laid down in writing by him, and accepted by the Consul of Great Britain and the Commanders of the European Powers acting in the name of their Admirals; that these conditions were reduced to writing by the British Consul himself, and duly signed by him and the Commanders mentioned; that in the document so signed the British Consul and the Commanders mentioned solemnly promise that the Turks of Candanos, relieved as stated, shall be disarmed, and prevented from harming the Greeks in any way thenceforward; and that, notwithstanding these conditions and promises solemnly made and signed as stated, arms were distributed to these very Turks on 25th March by the Mussulman authorities of Canea, who also permitted them when so armed to sally out and begin the work of massacreing their Christian fellow-countrymen anew; and, if so, whether these statements made by Colonel Vassos are well founded in fact?

*MR. CURZON: The allegation referred to in the hon. Member's question appears in the communication from Colonel Vassos to the Admirals about which Question 60 is asked by the hon. Member for Wick. May I therefore be permitted to answer both Questions at the same time? The British Admiral telegraphed yesterday that the Admirals had received a dispatch from Colonel Vassos full of misrepresentations. An inquiry about the particular subject mentioned in the Questions has been telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consul, but no reply has yet been received.

MR. J. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Powers have determined to employ artillery in Canea and Candia, and that the artillery selected for this purpose by England will be a mountain battery in Wales?

*MR. CURZON: The British Admiral reported on the 1st inst. that his colleagues had asked for three mountain guns each. We are not aware that any decision has been arrived at in regard to this request by any Power except Russia. It is understood that the Russian Government are sending a mountain battery.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the opposition which has hitherto been offered by Great Britain and France to the blockade of the Greek coast has now been overcome?

*MR. CURZON: No information can conveniently be given as to the individual views of Her Majesty's Government or of other Powers until an agreement is arrived at by all of them. [*Laughter.*]

*SIR C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state if the German Empire is to be represented in Crete by land forces?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No, Sir, I do not know that the troops of the German Empire are to be represented in Crete.

MR. MACNEILL said he desired to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a Question, of which he had given private notice. It was, unfortunately, a short notice, but perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would not answer it unless he knew. [*Laughter.*] The Question was—whether it was true that a British cruiser had captured three Greek sailing ships carrying provisions from one part of the coast of Crete to the other; and whether the rules of the blockade extended to the transportation of provisions from one side of the island to the other?

*MR. CURZON: I received the hon. Gentleman's notice of this Question only five minutes before I came into this House. [*Laughter.*] I think he must have forgotten the friendly appeal for sufficient notice which I ventured to address to the House in general and the hon. Member in particular. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR AND PEMBA.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps have been taken to carry out the pledge of Her Majesty's Government to make arrangements immediately on Mr. Hardinge's return to Zanzibar to abolish the legal status of slavery in that island and in Pemba; and when the promised change may now be expected?

MR. CURZON: The Decrees concerning the abolition of the legal status of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba will be issued in Zanzibar next week, and a Parliamentary Paper containing the Instructions of Her Majesty's Government to Mr. Hardinge will be laid simultaneously in this House.

MILITARY HOSPITAL, FELIXSTOWE.

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Army Sanitary Committee has made an inspection of the site for the proposed military hospital at Felixstowe; and whether he can give any information as to the site chosen?

*MR. BRODRICK: The site approved by the Army Sanitary Committee for the proposed military hospital at Felixstowe is about 1,000 yards north-east of Landguard Fort, and 165 yards from high-water mark.

MR. GODDARD asked whether special land had been acquired for the purposes of the hospital, and how far it was from the nearest residence?

*MR. BRODRICK said he could not say whether all the land was actually in hand, but that was the site which had been decided upon. He could not say exactly how far it was from the nearest residence.

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he intends making a statement to the House regarding the prevention of deporting paupers from England and Scotland to Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have already frequently told the hon. Member that this matter can only be dealt with by the Scottish Office and by the Local Government Board for England.

MR. DALY: I only want to know when the right hon. Gentleman will make a statement on the subject?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not for me to make a statement. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will address his Question elsewhere.

Mr. Thomas Bayley.

POST OFFICE ANSWERS.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in reply to questions on Post Office affairs addressed to him in this House by hon. Members, he has given answers drawn up by some permanent official, in respect of which the Postmaster General has not been consulted?

MR. HANBURY: The replies which I have given in the House to questions on Post Office affairs have been either approved by the Postmaster General himself or have been prepared by some officer of the Post Office acting with the Postmaster General's concurrence and by his direction. On ascertaining, however, that one or two unimportant answers had only been seen by the permanent chiefs, I expressed the opinion that every answer should be carefully considered by the Parliamentary head of the Department, and I am now informed in all cases where the answer has been passed by the permanent officials only, so that I may then make special inquiry myself and approve or disapprove the reply. So many questions are asked upon the same day on which they first appear upon the Paper, that it must necessarily sometimes happen that there is not time to obtain the views of both the permanent and political chiefs of the Department, and it is only in cases of that kind that any difficulty whatever has arisen.

KINGSTOWN TOWN COMMISSIONERS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the £700 due to the Kingstown Town Commissioners by the Treasury will be paid them?

MR. HANBURY: The sum referred to is about £750. It represents the arrears of contributions to rates, which the Government were under no legal obligation to pay, and which, since 1892, both the late and the present Governments declined to pay on the ground that the Town Commissioners did not fulfil their share in the maintenance of the roads in question. Had the agreement with the Town Commissioners been allowed to be carried out in the Bill which the hon. Member opposed last night, a sum of £750 would have been paid to the Town Commissioners—[*cheers*]—but the agreement must, of course, stand or fall as a whole. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the Attorney General if he will consider the advisability of sending up an indictment against the Kingstown Harbour Commissioners for a public nuisance in not keeping their roads in repair? [*Irish laughter.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): May I ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether there was any provision in the Bill last night for paying this £750, which the Government say they cannot pay legally?

Mr. HANBURY: No; but there was an understanding between the Treasury and the Town Commissioners, which was just as good. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Send up the indictment. [*Laughter.*]

CARBIDE OF CALCIUM.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General what are the previous precedents under the Petroleum Acts of Orders in Council holding that the "substance" therein referred to may be a solid?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight): The Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman is, I think, framed under a misapprehension. There are no previous precedents of Orders in Council under the Act, but the Act itself applies to solids as well as liquids, many of the substances specifically mentioned in the Act existing both in a solid and semi-solid state. The measures referred to in Section 7 are measures of capacity.

FOREIGN OFFICE.

Mr. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Attorney General by whom is the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs appointed, and what is the tenure of his office? The hon. Member added that he put the Question to the hon. and learned Gentleman at the request of the First Lord of the Treasury, who had yesterday referred him to the hon. and learned Gentleman for the information.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is appointed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with the approval of Her Majesty. His tenure of office is that of any other Member of the Government. [*Laughter.*]

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS.

Mr. FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if his attention has been called to the Message received by this House on the 22nd instant that in another place a Bill has been passed, intituled, "An Act to provide facilities for the Acquisition by Working Men of their own Dwellings"; and whether he will give facilities for the passage this Session of the same Bill through this House?

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if his attention has been called to the fact that for the second time the Upper House has this year unanimously passed, on the initiative of the Marquess of Londonderry, a Bill to facilitate the acquisition by working men of their own dwellings, and sent it down for the approbation of the House of Commons; and if, having regard to the circumstance that in two Parliaments a like Measure has been introduced into this House and supported by Her Majesty's Government, passed a Second Reading by a large majority, he will, bearing in mind the importance attached to the Measure by working men, put the Lords' Bill down for such an early day as will insure its enactment in the course of the present Session?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The object of the Bill is one with which everybody must sympathise, and it well deserves consideration by the House. ["Hear, hear!"] At the same time, I am not in a position to promise at the present juncture any Government time in the course of the Session for its discussion.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (BANK HOLIDAY).

Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN (Sussex, East, Grinstead): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Proclamation appointing the 22nd June to be a Bank Holiday will be gazetted?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The Proclamation of the Bank Holiday on June 22nd and the Thanksgiving Service on June 20th will be gazetted this evening.

Mr. MACNEILL: Does that apply to Ireland? [*Laughter.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I presume it does, but I should like to have notice of the Question. [*Laughter.*]

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

Mr. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will grant, as unopposed, the Return "Navy (Amounts expended in Great Britain and Ireland)," notice of which appears in the Paper for this day?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: If the object of the return is to show the amount of Imperial expenditure in the various parts of the United Kingdom, I think that the inquiry, if desirable, should be deferred until the Commission has reported as to what is Imperial expenditure. Let me add that I am afraid the return in the shape the hon. Gentleman asks for would involve such an enormous amount of labour on the part of the officials that it could hardly be granted, at least in that shape.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I put a supplemental Question to the right hon. Gentleman? I understand from his answer that he considers it desirable that this Question should be investigated by the new Commission which is going to be appointed. I would ask him whether the terms of reference as published would include an inquiry into that matter?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think the hon. Gentleman mistook the purport of my answer. I may have expressed myself obscurely. An inquiry as to where Imperial expenditure is spent does not, as he rightly suggests, come within the terms of the Commission. What the Commission will have to do is to determine what is Imperial expenditure, and when that is determined it will be for the House and the Government to consider whether a return should be granted showing where this Imperial expenditure is spent in the three kingdoms.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Does the right hon. Gentleman then intend to issue a third Commission to inquire into that?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: No, Sir; that will not require a Commission to carry it out. It will be carried out by the calculations supplied by the various Departments.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will inform us how much of the Navy Estimates are spent in Ireland?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE BILL.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will withdraw from the consideration of Parliament the Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill and the Patent Office Bill until after the proposed new Royal Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland has reported, so that the House may have an opportunity of judging to what extent Ireland would be charged or chargeable with this expenditure, and what benefits, if any, will accrue to Ireland from such expenditure?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I do not think the Commission would throw light on the Question raised by the hon. Gentleman. But in any case, it would be impossible to accept the principle he desires to lay down, since, if followed to its logical conclusion, it would stop not only all expenditure of whatever kind for material purposes, but also any special expenditure for the benefit of Ireland.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs) asked whether it would be convenient for the first Lord of the Treasury to state more in detail than he was able to do yesterday the course of business for next week?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: On Monday, as I think I stated before, the first Order will be the Resolution in Committee of the whole House for the Poor School Boards Bill. The second Order will be the Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill. These will follow the, I hope, comparatively uncontroversial questions which are down upon the Paper. On Thursday, the first Order will be the Berriew School Bill—[*ironical Opposition cheers*]—and the second Order will be the Criminal Evidence Bill. On Monday week, I should think, the most convenient course would be, although I do not pledge myself to it, to follow the precedent of last year, and put down first the Resolution enabling us to rise for the Easter holidays. After that I should hope to take the Second Reading of the Poor School Boards Bill. If I cannot find an opportunity of having the Board of Agriculture (Ireland) Bill introduced before, it will be introduced on Tuesday.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): What will be the business on this day week?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I have received no special intimation from any quarter of the House as to what Supply should be taken on this day week, and perhaps the Question had better be repeated on Monday or Tuesday next.

Mr. MORLEY: It will not be at all convenient to take the Second Reading of the School Boards Bill so very shortly after the Resolution, and I would point out that the right hon. Gentleman has omitted to make any allowance for the Report stage of the Resolution.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I have assumed that a Bill brought in by universal desire on both sides of the House, which is extremely short and extremely simple, is not one to which much Parliamentary time need be devoted [*Ministerial cheers*] or any great interval allowed for the purpose of setting down Amendments. With regard to the Report stage of the Resolution, I shall propose to take that on Thursday after midnight, as the Twelve o'clock Rule does not apply to it.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked whether there was any probability of a part of the time of the House being required for a Vote of Censure before Easter?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I have no information.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

VOTES AND GRANTS FOR LOCAL PURPOSES.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) rose to call attention to the present system of votes and grants for local purposes in England, Ireland, and Scotland, and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the amount and proportion of moneys expended out of the Exchequer for local purposes in each division of the United Kingdom and how far the financial relations established by the sums so contributed are equitable to Scotland."

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's Amendment should be amended by leaving out the words "the Exchequer," and substituting "moneys provided by Parliament," so as to make it clear that he does not refer to expenditure charged upon the Consolidated Fund by statute, which would be out of order on the present Motion.

Dr. CLARK said that he would so amend his Resolution. He therefore proposed to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words

> "a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the amount and proportion of moneys expended out of the moneys provided by Parliament for local purposes in each division of the United Kingdom, and how far the financial relations established by the sums so contributed are equitable to Scotland."

He said that in all the local services in Scotland the officers were only paid about half the salaries of the same class of officers in England or Ireland, and yet no equivalent was given to Scotland. He would give examples. The cost of the Local Goverment Board in England was £181,000; in Ireland, £131,000, and in Scotland, £11,000. Scotland had always been in favour of economy, but while her expenditure was economical, that for England and Ireland was extravagant. [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"] At the Scotch rates, the English Local Government Board would only cost £70,000. The first cause of the difference was the higher salaries paid to officials in England and Ireland. The Vice President of the Local Government Board in Ireland received £2,000 a year; the head of the Scotch Board only received £1,200 a year. In England the principal clerks began at £650 a year, and rose to £800. In Scotland they began at £400, and rose to £500 a year. Then a number of items in the English Local Government Board Vote were not included in the Scotch Local Government Board Vote, but were defrayed out of local resources. For instance, there was the audit, which it was clearly the intention of Parliament should be paid by the local bodies. This involved a cost of £10,000 a year, although the audit fees had twice been raised. Then there was poor law inspection, for which £3,000 a year was paid. When the change was made in 1886, it was intended that all these grants should cease. Every one of the Scotch grants had disappeared from the Estimates; most of the English grants had disappeared; but none of the Irish grants had disappeared. The payments in respect of Poor Law schools and metropolitan vagrant wards ought to go. He wished the English and Irish expenditure to be levelled down to the Scotch. There was the same disparity of salaries in regard to the Secretaries of the three countries. The Home Secretary's establishment was £123,000; that of the Irish Secretary, £42,000; and that of the Scotch Secretary £11,000. Although he had brought this matter before the House for the last 10 years, Scotland had been given no redress. As to the Prison Services, the chaplain or surgeon in a Scotch prison was paid £200 a year; the same officials in an English prison were paid £400 a year. Even the assistant surgeons in the English prisons began at £250. The Irish chaplains and surgeons received from £350 to £400 a year. The theory was, that living in Scotland was cheaper, and that Scotland was a poorer country. Then why was the poor country made to pay all the heavy taxes of the rich country? The police magistrates and the police in Dublin and London were paid out of the Estimates. If police magistrates were unfortunate enough to live in Edinburgh or in Glasgow not a single penny was paid by the Imperial Exchequer towards their maintenance. Parliament was paying over £300,000 a year for police in England and Wales, and the whole cost for Scotland was £1,000, which formed an item in the Vote of £11,000 for the Scotch Secretary's office. They were paying one and a-half millions for police in Ireland, about £300,000 for police in England and Wales, and only £1,000 for Scotland. He submitted that both London and Dublin ought to bear the cost of their own police. There were other services in England and Ireland for which Scotland got no equivalent. There was paid by the Exchequer for the Royal College of Science of London £18,400, a considerable portion of which went in scholarships, and for the Royal College of Science of Dublin, £7,000 for teachers and scholars, but not a single penny was paid to analogous bodies in Scotland. It was said, in reply to that, that Parliament voted money for the Scotch Universities. No doubt Parliament voted £42,000 for the Scotch Universities. Why? Because they were compelled to do so, as it was a burden taken over by the Treaty of Union. Scotland took over her share of the National Debt, and England took over the Scottish burdens, of which this was one, and placed it upon the National Exchequer. Scotland wanted an equivalent for these contributions to science in England and Ireland, so that Scotch boys might have the same chance as English and Irish boys had of being educated at the expense of the State. All Scotland got for science was simply the rent of the rooms of the society which belonged to the Government. Their complaint was not so great now, since the introduction of the new system of finance, by which these local grants were to cease, and in lieu thereof, each nation was to get a percentage, according to the sum paid into the Exchequer. If that was carried out, there would be a few hundred thousand pounds voted less, and money would be found from local sources. Registration in Scotland was entirely defrayed from local sources, but in England and Ireland it was defrayed partly from local sources and partly from the Imperial grant, £21,000 for England and £4,000 for Ireland. Why should that not be a local charge in both countries. Again, in connection with the new arrangements, when the tax was placed upon liquor it was pointed out to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer that England would be paying 66 per cent. and getting 80 per cent., that Scotland would be paying 19·4 and only getting 11, and Ireland paying 14·1 and only geting 9 per cent. The then Chancellor admitted that the burden he was placing on Scotland and Ireland was greater than the return they would obtain, and he agreed that a Select Committee should be appointed to consider the matter as between the three countries. He was sorry to say he had to accuse the late Chancellor of the Exchequer of want of good faith in connection with that Committee. He put down the Committee night after night during the Session of 1890, and it was only on the last days of the Session, on the third stage of the Appropriation Bill, that the Committee was appointed. It sat for one day. Next year it never sat at all; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer so used the forms of the House that, although he was successful in the ballot, he was prevented bringing the question before Parliament. The Chancellor of the Exchequer got his money, but he never gave Scotch Members their Committee, and the Committee never sat at all, except for the one day of a former Session, to which he had alluded. The late Government came into power then, and they were pressed to appoint the Committee. A year passed; nothing was done, because the time was taken up with the Home Rule Bill. The following year, in virtue of one clause of the Home Rule Bill, the question of the amount to be paid by Ireland towards Imperial expenses came up, and a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the financial relations between England and Ireland. Besides, the Treasury was busy getting up the Budget, and the Treasury officials were giving evidence before a Royal Commission. The result was that the Committee had not been appointed, and they did not know what the fair amounts were which had to be paid. There were, however, certain facts before them. Of the total revenue collected, 76 per cent. was collected in England, 12·7 per cent. in Scotland, and 9·8 per cent. in Ireland. But Ireland only got 9 per cent., Scotland 11 per cent., and England got 80 per cent. There was a theory that the payment was different from the collection. That might be, but the question required to be threshed out by a Select Committee. The first Return given was different from the present; every financial Return had been different from its predecessor. Last year they voted for Scotland one and a-half millions of these Estimates, England ten and a-half millions, Ireland £4,045,000. As things stood at present, the taxation per head in Scotland was higher than either in Ireland or England. It was because in Scotland they drank too much whisky, unfortunately. What they wanted for Scotland was an equivalent grant equal to the prodigality and extravagance shown in England and Ireland.

*Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee) seconded the Amendment. He said he thought that the attendance that afternoon after they had been three days mostly in a crowded House discussing the financial relations of Ireland, was an illustration of the patient, forbearing, and uncomplaining character of the Scottish people. [*Cheers.*] Some hon. Members thought that in the recent discussion a strong case was made out showing that Ireland was over-taxed to the extent of between two and a-half and two and three-quarter millions sterling. He thought it was very easy to show that if there was a strong case for Ireland there was a very much stronger case for Scotland. He held in his hand a concise statement, prepared, he believed, by Mr. Chas. Waddie, of Edinburgh, and published some time ago, to which he had seen no answer, certainly no contradiction. The statement brought out that while the general expenses of Government in Scotland was less than two millions—the precise figure being £1,919,000—the strictly corresponding expenses in Ireland, the population of which was only 700,000 more than that of Scotland, were £4,586,370. So that, if the offset that was spoken of was taken into account, the offset of expenditure in Ireland was very much in excess of that in Scotland. The net amount of the Inland Revenue in Scotland was ten millions and a quarter, from which, if they deducted the expenses, there was a balance of £8,328,330 remitted to the Imperial Exchequer. On the other hand, the total of the Inland

Revenue of Ireland was only £6,895,000, while the expenditure on its local government was £4,586,000, so that there was only transmitted from Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer, £2,309,000. These figures were, perhaps, sufficiently striking to go far to establish the case set up by his hon. Friend, but they by no means exhausted the case for Scotland. Taking the Inland Revenue of Scotland and comparing it with that for England and Wales and for Ireland, and then also taking the gross for the United Kingdom, these facts were brought out, that Scotland was, taking it per head of the population, by far the most highly taxed part of the kingdom, and contributed by far the largest sum relatively to the Imperial Exchequer. The total of the Excise, Estate Duty, Stamps, Income and Property Tax, and House Duty and Land, for Scotland was £10,247,000; dividing that by the population, 4,033,103, it yielded £2 10s. 9½d. per head. There were no figures approaching that for the other parts of the kingdom. The corresponding figures for Ireland showed a revenue of £6,895,000, a population of 4,704,750, and the amount per head of £1 9s. 3½d., or £1 1s. 6d. less per head than in Scotland. They heard of England always being put forward as a rich and wealthy country. Did it contribute in proportion to its richness and its wealth as much as Scotland? Not all. Its population was 29,001,018, dividing its total Inland Revenue of £54,363,615 by that population the yield was only £1 17s. 5¼d. per head, as against £2 10s. 9½d. per head in Scotland. These facts were striking, the result was almost directly the converse of that brought out by the representatives for Ireland. Scotland paid no less than £2,604,712 per annum more than her share, and if they compared that with Ireland, the amount of the excess paid by Scotland was £4,335,585. He thought that these figures, which hitherto had not been challenged, did, along with those brought forward by his hon. Friend, establish a very strong *primâ facie* case for the Motion. He did not appear as an advocate for extravagance, nor did he wish the salaries of the officials in Scotland to be largely increased. But at the same time he saw sitting by the side of the Chancellor of the Exchequer an official whom they all highly respected, and to whom they thought only justice was done two or three years ago when his official salary was brought more into correspondence with that of the Law Officers in Ireland and in England. They thought, in the case of the country which was paying more than its share to the Imperial revenues, that its officials ought not as a rule to be paid less than those in England, and certainly in Ireland. It was not the fact that the expense of living in Scotland was relatively so much less than either in England or in Ireland. In the large cities the expenditure, he should say, was quite equal to that in the large cities of either England or Ireland, and the minor officials of the Government, because they were a thrifty, frugal and saving people, who, however small their incomes might be, managed to save something, ought not to be punished and penalised for their good qualities. Why should prison warders and many other officials in Scotland be paid so much less than in England? There was no justification for it, and they were not advocating anything extravagant when they said with regard to such matters—with regard to police superannuation, for instance—that Parliament ought to be equitable, having regard to similar payments in England. He would listen with some curiosity to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's remarks. They only wanted what was fair and just as between the different parts of the country. They were not claiming for Scotland anything that was not her proper share, and they trusted that the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the question would give full weight to the considerations that had been placed before him.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had referred to the very small attendance on the present occasion as compared with that in the early part of the week as an evidence of the patient and uncomplaining nature of his countrymen. He should be very sorry to detract from any credit to which they might be entitled on that account, but his impression was that Scotchmen, like everybody else, were ready enough to complain when they had any real cause of complaint, and that, if there was a reason for the comparative lack of interest in the Motion, it was because there was not the cause of complaint in Scotland which the hon. Member for Dundee supposed. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] The hon. Member for Caithness had argued generally that Scotch officials were not paid at the same rate for services precisely similar to those which were required in the other two parts of the United Kingdom. His own impression was that there might have been something in the general lowness of income in Scotland as compared with England, which might have led to a lower scale of salaries throughout the public service. That, he apprehended, if it were so, would extend to the salaries paid by local authorities as well, and he did not see why, if persons in the service of the local authorities in Scotland were paid at a lower rate than persons in the service of the local authorities in England, those employed by the Government should enjoy an advantage denied to their brethren in the local service. But the hon. Member himself admitted that there had been of late years an improvement in this respect, and he personally did not object to a levelling-up of the payment of Government officials in Scotland, where it was perfectly clear that they were underpaid for their services as compared with English officials. The hon. Member went on to argue that certain payments were made in England and in Ireland from the Exchequer which were not made in Scotland, and he instanced, in the first place, the payments for the audit of the accounts of local authorities, which in England were made through the Local Government Board Vote. He fancied the reason why there was no similar payment for Scotland was that there had been no similar central audit hitherto of Scotch local accounts, and he apprehended that if such an audit were established there might be a fair claim on the part of Scotland for any payment of this kind that was made in England. Then the hon. Member went on to say that large payments were made for the police and for magistrates in London which were not made in Edinburgh, the metropolis of Scotland, but this was the first time he had heard that Edinburgh required any thing of the kind. As large a part of the payment of the Scotch county police was borne by the general taxpayers as was borne in the case of England.

Dr. CLARK: Not a penny is borne by Parliament. Ten years ago it was taken away, and we got our share of the probate duty. We are spending our own money.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said that was precisely the case in England. Both in Scotland and in England the payment of certain specific services from the Exchequer was abolished, and instead of that much larger grants were made out of the probate duty, and subsequently out of the beer and spirit duties. The one kingdom was treated in precisely the same way as the other in that respect. If the hon. Member thought it was not, that might be a fair matter for inquiry, and he would come very shortly to the best way of conducting that inquiry. With regard to grants for scientific purposes and matters of that kind, he hoped he did not regard the question solely from an English point of view in saying there should be larger payments comparatively for these services in the metropolis of the United Kingdom than in either the metropolis of Scotland or of Ireland. Coming to the speech of the Seconder, he admitted that, if the hon. Member really believed in the extraordinary figures he had quoted, he did not wonder that the hon. Member thought there was a very great grievance. He obtained those figures from a protest which had been issued by the Scottish Home Rule Association, and which he said had never been contradicted, and seemed to think, therefore, must be correct. This remarkable document stated that, whereas Scotland paid inland revenue to the amount of £10,247,000, only £1,919,000 was expended in the public service of Scotland, and that £8,328,000 was transmitted to England—going, as anyone might suppose from reading the protest, into the pockets of the English taxpayer. Then a comparison was made with Ireland, and it was shown that the net amount of inland revenue collected in Ireland was £6,895,000, that £4,586,000 was expended in Ireland, and that £2,300,000 was transmitted to England. In the first place he was bound to say he did not think he ever remembered seeing a document which purported to be a statement of finance more inaccurate and more misleading than this particular document. ["Hear, hear!"] It jumbled up in the most extraordinary way different charges obtained from different Blue-books, and omitted others entirely from the account. He would take the expenditure first. It included items for police, superannuation allowances, and for pauper lunatics taken from the Local Taxation Account, while they purported to be drawn from the Votes of the House. It did not include the items on the Consolidated Fund, such as the salaries of Judges and sheriffs, and it omitted certain Scotch services, such as the Universities and the Science and Art Department, and other expenses provided for from the local taxation revenue. As an account of expenditure it was entirely misleading. He would give his account of the expenditure taken from Parliamentary Paper 336 of the year 1896. From that Paper it would be found that the civil government charges met by the Exchequer revenue in Scotland were £2,749,000, to which they had to add the cost of collection, £355,000, and the Post Office services, £1,040,000, making a total of £4,144,000 as against the £1,919,000 given in the document from which the hon. Member for Dundee quoted. The Revenue Returns in that Paper were even more misleading than the expenditure. The whole item of Customs revenue was absolutely omitted. Everybody who had really studied this question knew that it did not depend upon the amount of revenue collected in Scotland, but upon the amount paid by the inhabitants of Scotland, after making the necessary allowance one way or the other in calculating what was really paid as compared with the amount collected. The Parliamentary Paper which he had quoted in this way reduced the amount of revenue paid by the people of Scotland by £2,400,000 below the amount named by the hon. Member for Dundee, and the net result was that whereas in England the people paid £2 11s. 9d. per head in taxation, in Scotland £2 9s. 3d. per head was paid.

Sir JOHN LENG asked if the calculations in the case of the English revenue were made in the same way as in the case of the Scotch revenue?

Chancellor of the Exchequer.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said the calculations were made in precisely the same way. The final result would appear to be from this paper that, with regard to the true revenue of Scotland, to the local expenditure of Scotland, and to the Imperial contribution of Scotland, under each of these three heads, the amount attributable to Scotland was about 10½ per cent. of the aggregate total for the United Kingdom. He did not think that was very unfair to Scotland. The hon. Member asked them to appoint a Committee to deal with this particular question, but he thought the hon. Member forgot the promise that had already been made by the Government. They had promised a Commission to deal with the case of Ireland, and they had advisedly added to the reference words which would include an inquiry into the position of Scotland with regard to the very matters which the hon. Member had brought under their notice. ["Hear, hear!"] The second head of that inquiry had regard to the expenditure on Irish local services, and that had to be compared by the Commission which it was proposed to appoint with the corresponding expenditure in England and in Scotland, and all three heads of the reference related as completely to Scotland as they did to Ireland, or to England itself. He was quite sure it would be futile to endeavour to conduct two inquiries of the kind at the same time by two different bodies, and he therefore hoped that the House would feel that the inquiry which had been already promised was not only sufficient but better adapted for the purpose of the hon. Member than that which he desired. Whatever might be the position of Scotland in this matter, whether it were fair or unfair, at any rate the truth would be better ascertained, and he hoped it might be ascertained, by the inquiry which they proposed. [*Cheers.*]

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) did not think any Scotsman, however violent his patriotic feelings might be, could find fault with the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman had addressed them. ["Hear, hear!"] He had indeed traversed some of the statements brought forward by his hon. Friends, but had done so in a sympathetic way, and had admitted that a great many of those points might be the subject of further and close inquiry. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood the object of his hon. Friend and those who thought with him. They might be of opinion that there were certain public services in Scotland which were somewhat underpaid, yet it was from no desire to obtain for their country larger or more expensive establishments that they brought this subject forward; but in order to show the House that Scotland was, in their opinion, unfairly dealt with, because of what they considered the somewhat expensive establishments maintained in other parts of the Empire, for which naturally they had to pay their share. It might very well be that the rates of payment in certain services in Scotland were fixed in consideration of the cheaper conditions of life which probably existed at the time, but he was by no means sure that nowadays the circumstances would justify the substantial difference in the rates of payment in the two countries. The right hon. Gentleman had distinctly stated that it was his intention to include the whole of this subject in the reference to the Royal Commission that was about to be appointed, which confirmed the assurance which had been given them by the Leader of the House some weeks ago. There was a good deal of force in what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the inconvenience of having at the same time two inquiries almost on the same matter, and they knew now that this matter would be further dealt with, and that they would at least understand how the case stood in regard to the financial duties and obligations of the three countries. ["Hear, hear!"]

Dr. CLARK asked whether there would be a proportionate number of Scotsmen on the Commission.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said they certainly hoped to have Scotch representation on the Commission.

Dr. CLARK asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment negatived.

AFRICA (EUROPEAN POWERS).

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) had given notice of the following Amendment, which he was precluded from moving:—

> "That it is the duty of the Foreign Office to consult European Powers having possessions in Africa as to whether they will attend a conference at which the measures agreed to at the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 and the Brussels Conference of 1889-90, with questions appertaining thereto, shall be considered with a view to the adoption and enforcement of further measures for securing equitable treatment of the natives of Africa."

He said the Foreign Office in 1882 had a policy with regard to East Africa and West Africa—namely, to keep Portugal on the west and in the whole of the Congo Basin, with stringent treaty obligations for the defence of trade, mission interests, and good government, and to keep Zanzibar on the east, Zanzibar being under the influence of this country. As regarded Portugal, an international Commission had been strongly urged by the Foreign Office for the control of the great river, but had been refused by Portugal, and the result was that the Treaty of 1884, as signed, did not contain the international Commission, and that both the House of Commons and the Great Powers were opposed to it in the form in which it was concluded. It was never ratified, and the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 was the result. At that Conference the Foreign Office desired to promote what they called "the permanent advantage of Africa," by which "the blessings of Christianity and civilisation" were to be brought nearer to the people. It was on these grounds that they recognised the Congo State, and that they provided a large area in which "the trade of all nations would enjoy complete freedom," and in which they prohibited "monopoly or privilege," and declared their intention to be "the preservation of the native populations, improvement of their moral and material conditions, and suppression of slavery and the slave trade." The Powers provided for the free navigation of the Niger, and its affluents, as well as for the free navigation of the Congo and its affluents. The Congo State was recognised as an anti-slave and pro-native power, and wishes were expressed by the Powers "for the fulfilment of the noble aspirations of its illustrious founder." The Foreign Office and the plenipotentiaries of the other Powers bound themselves, individually and collectively, to watch over the preservation of the natives; and nothing could be more emphatic than Foreign Office responsibility in that respect. In September 1888 Lord Salisbury pressed Belgium to call a further Conference. On the 26th March 1889 the late Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) pressed for a Conference on two matters—the slave trade and the general "responsibilities which European nations have now assumed in respect to Africa." The Government's reply covered also the prohibition of the import of arms into Africa, and the Government promised that there should be a Conference. The result was the Brussels Conference of 1889-90, out of which grew the General Act of the Brussels Conference, dated January 1892. This Act dealt, among other matters, with regulations for restricting the supply of liquor and the supply of arms, and provided arrangements "for securing its execution." There were to be bureaux for the "collection and communication of information as to the working of the General Act," and one such bureau had been set up by our Foreign Office, and was partly paid for in our Estimates, although a little of the cost was got back from some of the other Powers. It was at Zanzibar, and was supposed to collect information, but did not give much, as to the "working of the General Act." His case was, that in spite of these provisions, and in violation of them, there was monopoly on the Niger, monopoly on the Congo, and practice with regard to fugitive slaves in many colonies and protectorates, including some of our own, directly opposed to the protocols of Berlin and to the General Act of Brussels, and that arms were being imported on an immense scale by all the Powers for their barbarous allies. As regarded the Niger, a good deal of secrecy was observed, but a French Government expedition, commanded by Commandant Toutée, had recently visited almost the whole course of the Niger, and had given a considerable amount of information in its report, which might be untrue, but which, if untrue, ought to be contradicted and not met by silence. The expedition was one paid for by the French Government, and carried out under its direct instructions. The Niger agents were bound for 10 years not to communicate any facts with regard to the country in which they had served, under a penalty of £1,000, to be sued for as liquidated damages for each breach of the rule. He had himself investigated a murder case which had been brought to his notice by two officers of the Niger Company, in whose credibility he believed. But the Foreign Office had been unable to investigate the facts, because the officers were afraid of the provision in question. As regarded the Congo, the State, presided over by the King of the Belgians, was violating every clause in the Brussels Act, of which our Foreign Office were bound, individually as well as collectively, with the other Powers, to watch the due execution. The edicts of the Congo State themselves proved the assertion which he had made. One of 1887 confiscated all "lands in which private property has not been recognised," there being no private property in the greater part of this dominion. An edict of September 1891, which had been marked "secret," but which had come into his possession, declared that "all products of domain lands" belonged to the State, domain lands apparently being all lands in which there was not that private property which was not known to the aborigines. The same decree declared a monopoly of all rubber and ivory, which was a gross violation of the Berlin protocol of 1885, and of the conditions on which the Congo State had been recognised by the Powers. An attempt had recently been made to whitewash the Congo State in a Report to the King of the Belgians, dated January 7 of the present year. It was a fraudulent Report, stating, for example, that the Congo State had

> "given all flags free navigation of all waters and assured trade freedom . . . decreed punishment to all who use violence or threats to force natives to give up goods to particular persons, or at a fixed price."

Of course the Congo State did not wish that private individuals should rob the natives, because it preferred to rob them itself, and the offences pointed at in the Report were precisely those which had been committed by the Congo State under its own secret edict of September 1891. As regarded the fraudulent character of the statement that trade freedom had been assured, it was not more fraudulent than that of the Niger Company to the same effect, as to which any Liverpool merchant or any Liverpool representative in that House could enlighten them. With regard to fugitive slaves the Brussels Act declared that "any fugitive slave claiming on the Continent the protection of a signatory Power shall obtain it." He would not in this matter detain the House by going into cases which concerned other Powers, but would mention only some which had arisen in territories for which we were ourselves responsible. At Lagos there existed a practice of following fugitive slaves in the Protectorate, and recovering them by means of the Houssa police. In East Africa, the British East Africa Company, composed of philanthropists, were admitted by the Government to have been in the habit of surrendering fugitive slaves up to the very day of the expiring of the powers of the Company, upon the coast, and, in the Pemba case (within the Zanzibar Protectorate)—known as the "case of the atrocious torture of a slave"—although the slave-owner was ultimately punished for his abominable crimes, it came out in evidence that the slave in question had previously fled, and been restored to his master for torture and for further slavery. He relied, however, mainly upon the carelessness which had been shown in allowing the British East Africa Company's practice to continue unchecked until the extinction of the Company's rule upon the coast. As regarded the watching by our Foreign Office of the general provisions of the Berlin agreement as to the preservation of the native populations and improvement of their condition, and the terms on which the Congo State had been recognised, that State was habitually raiding with cannibal allies, and yet territory over which we claimed rights had been recently handed by the Foreign Office to Congo rule. A distinguished African explorer and public servant, the honour of whose acquaintance he possessed, had once told him that Baron Dhamis was by far the best of the Congo officers, and was a man of the highest character and reputation, but had added, "Yet even he has to ration his men on human flesh." He had himself thought this a ghastly African joke, but the recent appearance of the book of Captain Hinde had shown beyond all conceivable doubt that it was a statement of a literal fact. Baron Dhamis was now engaged in conquering territories which the Foreign Office had handed over to Congo rule by lease, with the statement that they knew that they were giving them to the cause of "civilisation." The last expedition of Baron Dhamis had been led by six white officers, of whom one was Captain Lothaire, and comprised 500 Houssas (mostly recruited by our permission in our territories), and 25,000 cannibal allies. Captain Hinde, who was its historian, was a devoted friend of Baron Dhamis who commanded it, and a friend and admirer (as he stated) of Captain Lothaire. The force was, as he showed, rationed for months upon smoked human flesh; and Captain Hinde went further and gave the reasons why cannibalism "proved a great element in our success." So far from civilisation being on the side of the Congo State, as the Foreign Office alleged, it had been on the side of the Arabs in these wars. The Arabs had had the chivalry to build tombs over the bodies of the only two Belgian officers whose bodies fell into their hands. On the other hand, Captain Hinde told the story of the treatment of the prisoners, and even showed why, to use his words, cannibalism had been on the increase throughout the Congo basin "since the entry of Europeans into the country." The Houssa troops with whom by the leave of the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, Baron Dhamis was conducting his expedition, had in previous Congo expeditions been treated with shameful cruelty. This was admitted, but it was now said by the Colonial Office that their treatment had improved. That was so, no doubt, upon the coast, but they had not the smallest security as regarded the interior. The Foreign Office had given a treaty right to the Congo State to recruit in our territories. On the 12th March 1896, the Colonial Office had explained that "British subjects had been employed without their consent as soldiers . . . . cruelly flogged, and in some cases shot." "Shot," as Captain Hinde explained, also meant eaten. The Colonial Office had in consequence prohibited the recruiting, and on the 17th April last the Foreign Office had confirmed the Colonial Office statement; but he confessed he was amazed that, after such conduct on the part of the Congo State, the Colonial Office should easily be satisfied by evidence from the coast that it was now safe to allow the Belgian officers to recruit Houssas in our colonies to serve in the present expedition, which in the deepest secrecy the Congo Government was conducting in the name of "civilisation," under treaty with us, in the sphere which we had leased to it. Turning to the liquor question he had to point out that in the Brussels Conference the Belgian delegate had attached the highest importance to this point, in which, as the delegate of the Belgian Government stated, "the welfare of the native race is at stake," while the President of the Conference, also a Belgian, called it "the chief cause of the destruction of the negro race." Our Foreign Office had wisely protested against the low minimum duty fixed, and was, he believed, at the present moment negotiating without much success, for higher duties. But under the Brussels General Act of 1892 the minimum was to be "submitted to revision at the end of the sixth year;" or else he feared all international obligation might lapse. They were now well in the sixth year, and it was necessary that whatever was to be done should be done at once. No one could doubt the earnestness of the Secretary of State for the Colonies upon this question. The minimum duty had been raised in the colonies, and although the Foreign Office had not, he feared, made the Niger Company raise its duty, yet it had raised the duty in the Niger Coast Protectorate, as the Colonial Office had raised that in Lagos from 1s. to 2s. He had himself moved for a Return upon this question in 1895, which had been granted, but it had not yet been circulated to Members. As regarded the Congo, gin was the chief article of importation into the country. The new railway carried nothing up but gin, and the exposure of this fact had been the cause of heated debate in the Belgian Chamber, and of the extreme narrowness of the division on which the prolongation of the railway had been voted. Yet the New Year's Report to the King of the Belgians—fraudulent in this respect as in all others—stated that the Congo Government had prohibited the liquor trade in some parts of their territory, but

> "where trade necessities make prohibition impossible, have put on the maximum duty of the Brussels Act, but think the time come to increase the maximum."

Advantage should be taken of this statement, fraudulent though it was, to insist on a fresh Conference; a fresh Conference for which he was certain that the Secretary of State must wish. His own suggestions were (and many more would occur to those in the Foreign Office who were skilled upon the question) that a new Conference might not only deal with the question which must immediately be dealt with, of the liquor trade, but might also adopt measures directed against sham treaties with the natives—measures of notification which might follow the analogy of the Berlin measures for the notification of annexations; that the Conference might also resolve that the Central Bureau should not only receive, tabulate, and circulate information as to the working of the Brussels General Act, but should call attention to abuses with a view to secure its observation. There had been a proposal adopted at Berlin upon this question, and upon the 23rd April 1891, the Foreign Office had been asked why the International Commission had not been appointed. The Foreign Office had made the playful answer that the attention of the Powers had recently been turned to other parts of Africa; but this was no laughing matter, and if we meant that which we had said at Berlin, at Brussels, and in Lord Kimberley's recent treaty (signed under the Rosebery administration) with the Congo State, then it was high time that we should take action to remove from ourselves the disgrace which had fallen upon our declarations. There had, indeed, been a sad falling-off in the attitude of the country upon this question, not in words, but in facts, since the noble stand which had been made with regard to it, in 1837, under the inspiration of Mr. Gladstone.

CAPTAIN BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness) said that the method of dividing up the continent of Africa was undoubtedly different from that which had been pursued elsewhere in former years, especially in connection with the continent of America. Attempts had been made to lessen the miseries and the misfortunes which had been brought on the aborigines by the modern methods, and at least the idea pursued had been a noble one. The Act of Berlin and the Brussels Conference embodied a noble idea, because their object was to avert the old plan of irresponsible persons settling here and there in smaller or larger numbers and making their sweet will the law. Something like a Government was proclaimed, and individuals were not at liberty to slaughter, rob, and steal at their own will. That in itself was a great advance; but so far the Brussels Conference and the Berlin Act had undoubtedly not been very successful. The operations of the Belgians in the Congo Free State had at any rate been unsuccessful, to some extent they had been unfortunate. That was, he thought, largely due to the fact that the Congo Free State was so enormous in size. It was impossible that the officials of that State could deal with it to the same degree as the Niger Company could deal with the territories under its command. Although the Congo Free State had failed to carry out the main objects of the Brussels Conference in preventing the importation of liquor, it had overthrown the power of the Arab which was chiefly used to carry the natives into slavery. So far as the Congo Free State was concerned he thought it was open to question whether a further conference would be able to strengthen the hands of that Government so as to make any material difference in their operations; and he did not think that any conference likely to be assembled, so far as this question was concerned, would be disposed to carve out, at present at any rate, the enormous territories of that State. As to the liquor traffic, he said that officials familiar with the West Coast of Africa and its natives declared that the evil effects of that traffic had been over-estimated. [*Cries of* "No!"] The money derived from the sale of liquor was used to aid in rooting out more frightful abuses connected with human sacrifice. There was, therefore, something to be said that something had been done to carry out the views of the Brussels Conference. He agreed that the introduction of gin among the natives was to be deprecated; still if there was a choice between the two things he would gladly see the revenue derived from its sale in order to put an end to these other terrible customs. There were great difficulties in the way of putting an end to the traffic in gin. It was a very old traffic on the West Coast of Africa. It was more than a hundred years old, and they could not put a stop to the traffic at once; they must have patience. A good beginning had been made especially in the territory under our sway. The right hon. Gentleman advocated a conference, and it was possible that some good might be done by such an assembly. He agreed that they might settle the imposition of duties on liquor by raising the minimum. He doubted whether they could do anything else beyond that which was of value. Officials of a company or of a Government having made treaties in regard to certain territory in a great hurry, went home with the agreements, and presently, when other officials of other Powers came back with their agreements, diplomatic difficulties arose. A great feature of the history of Africa in the last 15 years had been the wise attempts that had been made to avoid future conflict of interests by the parcelling out of that enormous continent among the Great Powers. At least two great wars had arisen in the past out of difficulties of the kind in other parts of the world. It was wise and statesmanlike to endeavour to avoid such causes for misunderstanding by this parcelling, and unwise to allow the agent of any Government or company to make agreements that might bring Governments into conflict and provoke the dangers of war. The House, he thought, would feel that the right hon. Baronet had done good service in bringing this matter forward, and although he did not anticipate any great result if such a Conference assembled, the discussion and expression of views would have a good effect.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): There can be no doubt that the right hon. Baronet has raised a most important subject, and in the course of his speech has covered a very wide field, with a knowledge of his case and a lucid explanation of details such as we are accustomed to from him. I will endeavour to deal with the various points he has raised in the order in which he mentioned them. First he referred to the Congo State, with reference to which he said that all the stipulations of the Brussels Act have by edicts and Acts and monopolies been violated. The right hon. Baronet will, I think, acknowledge that it is no part of my duty to defend the Congo State, nor of the duty of Her Majesty's Government to act as guardians of the public trust imposed on the Congo State by the Acts of Brussels and Berlin, though his words seemed to imply that some special responsibilty rests upon the British Government.

*SIR C. DILKE: As regards one part of the Congo State very special responsibility by treaty with and lease to the State of territory.

*MR. CURZON: That is a smaller point to which I will come in a minute. Our general responsibility is only our share of the collective responsibility attaching to the signatories of the Acts, and to call upon me to enter into any general defence of the acts of the Congo State would be unreasonable. There can be no doubt that great mistakes have been made in the administration and work of the Congo State, and its agents may, from time to time, have taken steps and adopted methods which are repugnant to the feelings of all Christian men; and, indeed, it does seem that in the heart of Africa passions are roused and deeds are done such as are dissimilar from what we find in other parts of the world, and in those remote and wild territories, far away from any contact with civilisation or with the humanising influences of ordinary social life men are converted into other than the human beings we know. But, on the other hand, it is only fair to remember that the Congo State has done a great work, and that by their administration the cruel raids of Arab slave dealers have ceased to exist over many thousands of square miles. Then I come to the particular point raised when the right hon. Gentleman emphasised the special responsibility resting upon the British Government from the fact that we have leased a certain portion of the Upper Nile basin to the Congo State, and that under that treaty an expedition has been made. What guarantee have we, the right hon. Baronet asked, that things similar to those complained of in the past will not be repeated there? Well, we have no positive guarantee except such as we may find in the character of the commanding officer, of which the right hon. Gentleman has himself spoken favourably; in the publicity that has attached to previous scandals, and in the authority of the King. And I think I may also add that whatever responsibility does arise for the particular agreement alluded to does not fall upon us, for it was by our predecessors that it was concluded. Passing from the Congo State, I come to a point where our own responsibility is more directly and immediately concerned. I speak of the Niger Company. Here the right hon. Gentleman reiterated a charge which I have continually heard and frequently seen in the newspapers, that the Niger Company are the possessors of an illegal monopoly which constitutes a violation more particularly of the Act of Berlin. I have heard that charge so often made that I have looked into the question, and have referred to the Act, and I am bound to say that I cannot find that the charge is sustained. The international position of the Niger Company is fixed by Articles 26 and 27 of the Berlin Act, under which it is declared that the navigation of the Niger river shall be free to the merchant ships of all nations, and that the subjects and flags of all nations shall be treated equally for boat-trade on the course of the river. So they are, subject to the regulations of the company, which are issued under the authority of the Government, and have been made known to foreign Powers, and not objected to by them. On this point, therefore, no charge of illegal monopoly can be sustained. Then I look at the charter of the company, and I find in the 14th clause the prohibition of all monopolies, and I find this explained as meaning that there shall be no differential treatment of the subjects of other Powers; and I find that there is not, but that they pay exactly the same duties as British merchants and traders. It may be said that the heavy licence duty imposed by the Niger Company constitutes a practical monopoly, and I do not deny that; my point is, there is no violation of the international law of Europe. It cannot be denied that the Niger Company, by virtue of its superior wealth and organisation, by its tactics in buying up its adversaries, and by the length of time it has been in the field, has acquired for itself a position almost impossible for any private agency to compete with, and has secured practically a trade monopoly of the Lower Niger. That I admit, and

I am not here to criticise or defend it; but I say, so far as my judgment is worth anything, that it does not seem to me to be a violation, as the right hon. Baronet appeared to consider it, of the Act of Berlin.

Captain BETHELL asked as to the limit of duties.

*Mr. CURZON: I am not aware.

*Sir C. DILKE: Has the right hon. Gentleman looked into the charge that they will not allow any ship to go up the river at all?

*Mr. CURZON: I have not seen that charge, but if the right hon. Baronet will give me any information he has I will look into it. Then I come to the next topic touched upon by the right hon. Baronet—the liquor question—and I thank him for the frank and well-deserved words of praise he has used towards the British Government—not this Government particularly, but British Governments generally. There is no doubt that, just as public opinion in this country is ahead of that in other countries, so the British Government has taken, and is prepared to take, the lead in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman points out that the time for the revision of the Brussels Act is drawing near, and he says, "What are you doing with a view to revision in the course of next year?" Before I answer that question I will just refer him to the words of Article 92 of the Brussels Act:—

> "At the end of the sixth year—that is, in 1898—the duties shall be submitted to revision for the purpose of fixing, if possible, a minimum duty throughout the whole extent of the zone referred to."

Therefore, it is a permissive, not a compulsory, revision; and, whatever the views of the Government may be, and whatever our interests, it may not be in our power to give effect to them. The House will gather from what I have said that, so far from having any objection to a conference, we should be only too glad to enter into it, and we are in communication with foreign Governments on the matter. It is due to that fact that the Blue-book promised long ago by the Secretary for the Colonies has not been presented. Then I come to what I may describe as the novel suggestions, but, if novel, also of great importance, which have fallen from the right hon. Baronet—namely, as to the enlargement of the functions and powers of the International Bureau; and the first of the suggestions which he makes is that the International Bureau should have the power of taking charge of the various treaties that are made in the interior of Africa. Under the Berlin Act the notification of occupation is limited to the coast. The right hon. Gentleman says, "Why can't you extend this to the interior?" I think a moment's observation will show the House that the circumstances are not at all analogous. Occupation on the coast is patent to the eyes of all men. There are, therefore, special reasons for enforcing just as there are easy means for executing that provision. But when you come to the interior, what is the case? The right hon. Baronet spoke about sham treaties. How is the International Bureau or any authority to distinguish between what is a sham treaty and what is a real treaty? In those regions you have travellers, official and unofficial, some of them responsible, perhaps a majority of them irresponsible; some of them traders on their own account, but not objecting to do a little political business as well; others, the leaders of organised expeditions. All these people act, more or less, as treaty-makers and political agents on a small scale. Then take the nature of the documents themselves. Who is to determine and on what principles it is to be laid down that one document is to be accepted and that another is fallacious? The way the thing works in practice is as follows:—Foreign Powers make agreements with each other; agreements not necessarily binding on any but those who make them, and often not accepted by other Powers. They make these agreements as to spheres of influence, and within these spheres of influence they consider that their agents are at liberty to go about and make treaties. But if every sort of treaty that is made has to be reported to an International Bureau at Brussels or elsewhere there would arise not merely the difficulties I have mentioned, there would also come the question of the time within which the announcement has to be made and the consequences that would ensue if the Bureau declined to accept it or regarded it as faulty; and I think it is easy to imagine that any such process might produce an amount of bickering and international friction, incomparably greater than even the great drawbacks that ensue from the present system. That is the view we entertain, and I believe it will be shared in perhaps an aggravated degree by foreign Powers. The next suggestion made by the right hon. Baronet was that the Central Bureau should have power to report to all the signatory Governments any infractions of the Act. Here, again, it is not the British Government that would stand in the way. If the right hon. Gentleman will refer to the conference at Brussels and will read the protocols he will see that it was the contention of our representatives at the conference that the powers and functions of the Bureau should be extended. But the other Powers were indisposed to agree to this. They preferred to draw their own conclusions from the facts circulated to them by the Bureau rather than to concede any initiative in the matter to the latter. Therefore, here again if we were to approach Foreign Powers I am afraid the hopes of the hon. Member would be doomed to disappointment. In conclusion I would like to say that I entirely endorse one remark that fell from my hon. and gallant Friend behind me, and that is that on the whole, not merely in the inception of these acts, but in their execution, the ideas for which all civilised nations are striving, of justice, civilisation, and freedom, have made, and are continuing to make, great progress, and that in the history of their application it can without undue self-satisfaction, be shown that this country has not been their least jealous or their least vigilant guardian. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar), referring to the position of the Congo State, admitted that it might be difficult at the present juncture to raise internationally the whole question of the position of the Congo State again. But nobody who had followed African politics could fail to think that the Congo State, which it was hoped was going to be a great moral agent for the improvement of Central Africa, had very largely failed in the mission for which it was founded. It was a matter to which the attention of the Government ought to be carefully directed, and if opportunity should occur that some steps might be taken to bring further international control over that part of Central Africa. With regard to the Niger Company, the real ground for complaint was not so much that the company had broken any particular provision of the Brussels or Berlin treaties. The real difficulty was to get any information with regard to them. The control of the Foreign Office over the Niger Company was confessed to be almost nil, whereas if it were placed under the Colonial Office we should then be able to bring to bear on its administration that public opinion and public control which at present were entirely lacking. The really important point in the discussion, however, was the question of having a fresh conference to consider the question of the liquor traffic on the West Coast of Africa. Since the Brussels Conference, seven years ago, greater strides had been made in the acquisition of Africa by France, Germany, and England than had been made probably in any other period of history; and these questions of dealing with the natives had taken a different complexion. The limit of six years fixed at Brussels would shortly expire; and then there would be no power of compulsion on the part of the Powers to compel any of the other Powers to agree to the minimum taxation. He did not, therefore, think it was premature to ask that an international congress should be summoned. The right hon. Gentleman said the matter was not of very great moment, because there was no power of fixing a minimum in regard to the taxation of liquor. But it was because they believed that public opinion in France, Germany, and England was in favour of this minimum that they urged that the present moment was opportune for calling these three Powers and the Congo Free State together to consider the question. He did not wish to exaggerate the nature of the evil, but anyone who would look into the figures would see that the consumption of liquor had enormously increased during the last five or six years in the British, French, and German West African colonies. And it must be remembered that this increase did not coincide with an increase in ordinary trade. Where the natives spent their money on liquor they did not spend it on cotton and other goods, and, practically, by allowing these spirits to be introduced, we were very largely diminishing our own trade. There had been two great difficulties in dealing with this matter. In the first place, in considering the question of raising the spirit duties, they had to look to the position of each individual colony. All their colonies on the West Coast were self-supporting colonies, and it would not be fair for the Home Government to come upon them suddenly and, by raising the duties unduly or too rapidly, sweep away their principal sources of revenue. But, admitting that, he thought they had moral obligations in regard to the matter. The Home Government, in conjunction with these colonies, had set a very good example to Germany and France, and the real reason—and this was the second difficulty—why successive Governments had not been able to do more in the matter, was that already their duties on their West African colonies were very considerably higher than they were in the neighbouring German and French colonies. If they were to unduly raise the duties they would find, he was afraid, that the spirits would come in all the same from the neighbouring colonies, and that they would lose the revenue on the imported spirits, and the trade which, in the ordinary way, would come to the English colony. To his mind the Niger Company had, in the matter of the import of spirits, set a very good example indeed, because in the very large proportion of their territories the sale of, and trade in, spirits was entirely and absolutely prohibited. ["Hear, hear!"] He was afraid that, unless they could come to some international agreement, all their professions and all their desires would necessarily be frustrated, and he hoped the negotiations to which the Under Secretary referred would bear proper fruit. He was quite sure that that Debate would do something to show that they in England anxiously desired to alleviate and improve the lot of the native tribes on the West African Coast.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said it was his firm conviction that not only was it high time, but that the time had almost passed, for having a further conference with the Powers interested in Africa. He wished in what he was going to say to stiffen the Government in the direction of doing what was necessary in Africa. He was sorry to hear the Under Secretary speak in such disparaging terms of the conduct of white men in the interior of Africa. He thought his remark was based upon the single and signal instance in the Congo State. He was confident the right hon. Gentleman would agree with him that in the Niger, Uganda, the Shiré Hills, and wherever Englishmen had to do with establishing the security and peace of the natives, there had been nothing of the villainy which they knew had occurred in the Congo State. A point which he would press upon the House, for he did not think it had been sufficiently regarded in the country, was the enormous commercial importance to this country of a proper treatment of the natives of Africa. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1865 a Resolution was passed by the House to the effect that all further extension of territory or the assumption of government, or new Treaties conferring any protection on native tribes, would be inexpedient, and that the object of the policy of this country should be to encourage the natives with a view to the ultimate withdrawal from all parts of tropical Africa, except perhaps Sierra Leone. Since 1865 British trade with tropical Africa had risen from three millions to nine millions. In 1884 the European Powers held their first conference; in 1889 their second; and it was high time we should have another consultation with the Powers. There were questions pending which were seriously hampering and delaying the carrying out of that advantage to the natives which was really the only motive and the only reason for Britain being in Africa at all. A conference could settle the great questions which had been already mentioned, especially that dealing with the liquor question. Anybody who had followed what we had done and were endeavouring to do in Africa must feel that although under the previous conference spheres of influence were declared, the boundaries of these spheres and of our own possessions, and of those of other countries were in many instances in such a state of chaos as to be an extreme danger to the peace of Africa. If a conference did nothing else but to finally settle the boundaries of these spheres of influence and of the various States, it would have accomplished one great purpose. A conference might do something, too, in another respect. European Powers had not acted upon the principle that when they acquired a part of Africa upon which they put their national colour, they should recognise their responsibility to secure an effective administration for that area. They ought to be made responsible in that matter. He did not say that annexation was necessary, but certainly a further step ought to be taken in the direction he had indicated, and another conference might take that step. Another point which was of the utmost importance at present, in which they saw promise of trouble, most lately in Madagascar, was that the private rights acquired either before or after occupation by any foreign Power in any area, should be recognised in some definite form. They knew very well that in recent instances missionaries who had preceded the conqueror were being treated in a way which he did not think this country would approve of, and in such a matter he thought the conference might do great good by a further and more exact definition of private rights. There was also a great question to be dealt with and which was closely connected with the liquor traffic, namely, that of raising revenue. He thought the Powers in Africa might very easily come to an agreement now, considering the force of public opinion in all foreign countries on one question, that of Customs tariffs on spirits. He believed himself from what he had gathered, that they should have common agreement now, that at all events the duty on spirits should be on some definite and similar level. He knew himself from personal observations on the coast of Africa, that it was no use their trying to raise their import duty on spirits or to prohibit the introduction of arms and ammunition when other Powers occupying neighbouring strips of territory permitted the free importation of these articles. It was one of the most important points in the future administration of Africa that a common Customs tariff on these articles should be determined upon by the Powers. He did not despair of a conference of the kind proposed arranging some exchanges of territory so as to consolidate the various areas under certain flags. He had seen a great many troubles arise from these haphazard, small strips of coast line which had been pounced on by various Powers, and he was convinced that if the Powers saw their true interests, they would agree by peaceful methods of exchange to organise the coast line, at all events, under one administration and one flag, to extend without any break. This would greatly simplify that very difficult question, the control of the Hinterland. He believed that after all the expenditure of blood and money in the late Ashantee expedition there were already foreign Powers endeavouring to intervene and reap the harvest of our work in our Hinterland. He thought for that reason alone the conference might do great good in Africa. But he hoped this country would remember that we were responsible for the lives and liberties and for the peace and prosperity of an enormous number of natives. ["Hear, hear!"] He took the trouble some time ago to work out the number, and he did not scruple to say that they were roughly accurate. It might surprise hon. Members to know that in East, West and Central Africa we were responsible for no less than 50 millions of natives. If he might appeal to a somewhat low motive, to have as a market for our manufactures an area peopled by 50 millions was no inconsiderable consideration. He hoped, what he had said would convince the Government that it was high time for us to approach any foreign Powers who had any concern in African affairs.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) thought that a more remarkable speech than that of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had not been delivered in the British House of Commons for many a long day, and he confessed he was astonished at the answer the right hon. Gentleman received from the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. It had been assumed by various speakers that the chief object of European Powers in interfering in African affairs was to carry to those remote regions the blessings of Christianity and civilisation, and yet the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had stated in the House to-night, and no one had challenged his statement, that the representative of one of the greatest of those Powers—one of the greatest in so far as its extent of territory in Africa was concerned—marched to the conquest of a great territory in command of 25,000 savage auxiliaries who were fed on human flesh, that every prisoner taken on that expedition was speedily eaten by the soldiers of the civilised Power, that the dead were taken up from their graves, without restraint from the representative of this Christian Power, and eaten; and that one of the main causes of the success of the expedition was that in consequence of these practices there was no necessity to provide an ordinary commissariat for the troops. He believed the country would be astonished when they read this Debate to-morrow. Was it not twaddle to say that such interference had a civilising effect? He was surprised to hear the hon. and gallant Member for Holderness, whom he knew to have a most humane disposition, to say that the balance between evil and good was in favour of good since European influences were introduced into Africa. They rejoiced when European influences in that country had been influences for good, but his reading led him to believe that, except in certain favoured spots, European Powers went to Africa, not for civilising purposes, but for trading and selfish purposes, because they regarded the millions of Africa as a good raw material for trade. He believed firmly that the Mahomedans had been more successful in civilising those parts of Africa where they had gone than the Christians. Why? Because the Mahomedans, who, although they had a lower form of morality and religion than the Christians, practised their religion and acted up to their morality, which, he was sorry to say, most Christians who went to Africa did not. If European Christian Powers encouraged cannibalism and slavery, traded in gin, and put arms of precision in the hands of savages so that they could slaughter the neighbouring tribes, they destroyed all the attempts of missionaries and others to preach the Christian religion. He rose particularly, however, to say a few words about the Matabele and the Mashonas, because the hon. Member for Liverpool and the hon. and gallant Member for Holderness looked forward with some gratification to a European conference. He would like a European conference, but at the same time he would like to see this country go into that conference with clean hands; if we were going to claim from other Powers good Christian treatment for the natives of Africa we must commence by setting our house in order. When the East Africa Company were deprived of their Charter they admitted that they were doing their work by slave labour. That was at the time that the building of a railroad into the interior was advocated. What were the arguments in favour of the construction of that railroad? That it would enable the directors to dispense with slave labour. He did not know whether slave labour was still employed, but it was undoubtedly employed by the British Chartered Company. It was not so much what was being done in the Congo region as in other parts of Africa—in Mashonaland and Matabeleland. No doubt hon. Members had read a very remarkable article in *The Contemporary Review* by the Rev. John Mackenzie. No one could read that article without the blush of shame rising to his cheek. He was a man, he understood, of the highest authority in these matters, and he said that the system of forced labour under the Chartered Company was worse than the old system of domestic slavery. Apparently this system was going to be a permanent institution. The natives complained that their country was gone, their cattle were gone, their people were scattered, their women had deserted them, and the white men did what they liked with them. This was the state of affairs in Matabeleland which they had attacked, ruined, and robbed. Every woman was taken away from them by the white man! They had brought neither peace, civilisation, nor Christainity to this unhappy people. Except in a few favoured spots they had taken horrors into the land worse than had been experienced under their own tribal wars. In his judgment it was impossible to say that they were there for the purpose of civilising these people. They had heard reference to human sacrifice, and the efforts made to put it down; but would the attempt to put it down ever have been made if the tyrant of Benin had not interfered with trade. Everyone knew that the object of that expedition was not to put a stop to these cruelties but to open up trade.

*Mr. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said that, although he was entirely at one with the sentiments of the hon. Member, he could not agree with him in many of his observations. He listened with unusual pleasure to the able and conciliatory remarks which the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had made. The real fact was that the only hope for reform in Africa was through publicity. The first step which should be taken was to restore some sense of humanity to those who were sent out. There was no public tribunal before which they could be arraigned. He could not approve of the introduction of the treatment of the Matabeles into this discussion; that would be the subject of inquiry by the Committee now sitting. The evils complained of could only be remedied by a public inquiry.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said there were only four or five men who had been bold enough to go to Africa to find out for themselves the facts on this matter, and the hon. Baronet the Member for the Kirkdale Division was one of them. He regretted that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had not traversed the regions which the hon. Baronet had traversed. He thought that, if he had the knowledge which some of them had, he would not take so optimistic a view as he had taken, and unjustifiably taken, in face of the damaging and serious speech of the right hon. Baronet. [Sir C. Dilke: "What did the Under Secretary do?"] He refused co-operation to bring about an International Conference, by means of which England's position would not be damaged. Honesty and kindness was the best policy in Africa as elsewhere. He believed that if there were a Conference, they could maintain their worthy position in Africa, and act up to the best level that England had taken as the pioneer for the abolition of slavery.

*Mr. CURZON: I think the hon. Member cannot have heard what I said. So far from opposing it, I said we were in communication with other Governments on the point.

Mr. BURNS said he would have liked the Under Secretary to say more than that. There was the question of the competition between the Niger Company and Lagos, which was a Crown colony. From his knowledge of the Gold Cost and West Africa generally, he believed that a consolidation of the spheres of influence, giving a continuity of coast line and consolidating tracts of territory now owned by different nations, might be brought about by a friendly interchange of negotiations between the various Powers. He trusted that, whatever might be the result of the Conference, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs would see whether it was not possible to give the naval officers in charge of the vessels along the coast a freer hand than they had at present, to teach the officials and agents of chartered companies better behaviour. He did not agree in the criticism the Under Secretary passed on the right hon. Baronet's suggestion, that an international bureau should deal with the supervision of treaties. He had had the misfortune of conveying treaty makers up from the mouth of the Niger, and he knew how these treaties were made, and he ventured to say that they were secured in circumstances that were not creditable to the chiefs who made them, or to the company which asked for them. If a Conference were held it was sure to exercise the right spirit in controlling the irresponsible action of minor officials and agents. It was a curious fact that in old days, when the missionary or Scotch factor or agent went to the West Coast of Africa, their isolation made them behave themselves, and the missionaries, agents, and officials of 50 and 100 years ago were more kindly in their behaviour than they had been within the last 10 or 15 years. As an old servant of the old Niger Company, he believed that the Government ought to insist on less secrecy on the part of the chartered companies. He disagreed entirely with the hon. Member for the Holderness Division in his view of the effect of liquor on the native. The hon. Gentleman's view was that, bad though it was, it was not so bad as it had been depicted. He gathered that the hon. Gentleman would rather see 100 natives killed by drink than five or ten killed in battle or eaten by cannibal neighbours; but he would point out that the connection between drink and cannibalism was closer than many people thought. He had ventured to support the right hon. Baronet in his demand for a Conference, and in so doing he endorsed the view expressed on one point by the hon. Member for Mayo, and that was, that, speaking broadly and generally, the natives of Africa, from North to South and from East to West, had not gained the balance of advantage by the introduction of European customs, habits, and methods, or by the introduction of Christianity and civilisation so called. It was because the black record of modern European encroachment in Africa had one bright spot—and that this country possessed—that he wanted England to be the first and foremost nation in the councils of the world, and to stand by her past traditions, and do everything in her power to save the natives from the baneful influence of drink. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) said that the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs expressed the opinion not only of the House of Commons, but of the country, when he said that all were united in their ideas with regard to the natives of South Africa. The first idea was to do away with human sacrifice in Africa, and it was clearly in the interests of Africa that the small wars which had lately taken place were undertaken. What were the means by which the end aimed at was to be accomplished? We must have the right men to do the right kind of work, and the control of the House of Commons must be efficient and thorough over everything going on in Africa. The hon. Member for Mayo had read a passage from a document written by a Dr. Mackenzie, a gentleman who was very well thought of in South Africa. That gentleman made serious charges, not only against the Chartered Company but also against the House of Commons, for allowing these proceedings. Dr. Mackenzie said that the Chartered Company had conquered Matabeleland and now stood in the place of Lobengula. Every man was now at the disposal of the Company. A charge like that made by Dr. Mackenzie against the Government of the day was one which they ought to investigate, to see if it were correct or not. One of the first clauses of the charter of the British South Africa Company stated that it was given on the terms and conditions that equal rights and privileges should be given to the natives. It was a very serious question whether, by taking the cattle which was the private property of the Matabele, the Charter had not been broken from beginning to end. If so, that was a serious thing for the honour and good name of this country. But a more serious charge than that had been made, and that was that the company had provided the natives with arms, which might be used against a European State with which we were in friendly relations at the present time. That charge ought to be thoroughly investigated by the Colonial Office, and if true the practice ought to be stopped at once. By joining in any conference at Brussels or Berlin this country would not be relieved of any personal responsibility in regard to any part of its territory in South Africa. What they wanted in regard to things that were going on in South Africa was the light of public opinion. There were things going on in the name of this country, and to its dishonour and discredit, which, if known to the people of this country, would be put a stop to at once. The feeling aganst slavery and what was going on in South Africa was not dead in this country, but many people would not believe that the statements made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) that night could be true, and, therefore, the only safety we would have in South Africa was the safety of public opinion as expressed in the House of Commons. ["Hear, hear!"]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

On the return of Mr. Speaker, after the usual interval,

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) rose to call attention to the congestion of work at the Local Government Board Department. He said that he raised this question last year, when the President of the Local Government Board gave a pledge. In complaining that it was difficult to get questions, small in themselves, but of great local interest, speedily attended to, he wished to exonerate the officials of the Local Government Board, for there was no more competent body of public servants in the country. His complaint was rather on their behalf, for they were much overworked. An enormous task had been imposed on them by legislation; and scarcely a year went by without some Bill being passed which made the task heavier. It was very important, therefore, that where the duties performed by the Board could be better discharged by local bodies with local knowledge, they should be transferred. Under the Act of 1888 the Board had power to delegate some of its duties to the County Councils; and he had already pointed out how much better questions of boundaries, for instance, could be dealt with by such bodies. There were also questions of the sale of drugs, and of audits and loans, where the powers of the Act of 1888 might be usefully put in operation. He should like to know how far the Inquiry of the Departmental Committee on this question had proceeded. He desired also some information with regard to the question of the grouping of counties. He knew the difficulties which Local Government Board inspectors had in getting guardians, especially in rural districts, to realise their duties in regard to such questions as district nursing, outdoor relief, allotments, and the supply of pure water, and he would suggest that some of the powers already conferred on the Local Government Board of delegating their functions, not to County Councils, but to groups of County Councils, should be brought into operation.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.) said the pressure on the Local Government arose in two ways. In the first place, the Acts of 1888 and 1894 placed something like 16,000 local authorities under the Board for the first time. The delay that had arisen in public business in that Department had been due, first, to an inadequate engineering staff; secondly, to an inadequate staff in the architects' department; and, thirdly, to a deficiency of auditors, especially with regard to County Council audits. As was well known, before rates could be mortgaged an inquiry must be held, and in nine cases out of ten that inquiry required expert knowledge, and, therefore, if the staff was short the work must be delayed. The same thing was true in regard to the architects' department, and undoubtedly great delay had taken place because of the pressure there. There had also been loud complaints because it had been found impossible with the audit staff to close some of the accounts within the financial year. All that was bad enough, but it was capped by the inadequacy of the clerical staff to deal with the reports from the various departments named. Things came to a head last year. There were strong complaints from public bodies, town councils, county councils, and poor law boards, and a Departmental Committee was appointed to inquire into the whole working and organisation of the Department, and also into the question of possible devolution of work. He was happy to say that the Committee had agreed to a provisional report which, so far as he was concerned as representing the Department on that Committee, was entirely satisfactory, and which he believed would do a great deal to lessen the delay that had unfortunately occurred in the past. What they did was to supply immediate and effective relief to the departments most pressed. With regard to the devolution of work, it was clear, according to Section 10 of the Act of 1888, that Parliament intended that something of this nature should be done in the future. Accordingly, in 1889, the Local Government Board, the Home Office, and the Board of Trade introduced a Provisional Order Bill, which, having passed Second Reading, was sent to a strong Committee of which Sir J. Stansfeld was Chairman. The Committee proposed to devolve a great number of duties now discharged by State Departments on the County Councils, but the non-county boroughs intervened, and the Committee was forced to drop the Bill. It failed solely because of the opposition of the non-county boroughs, who objected very strongly to being placed under the new jurisdiction. He did not think there was any feeling on the part of County Councils, but non-county boroughs preferred to be under the Local Government Board rather than under the County Councils. He thought, however, that, without coercing the non-county boroughs in any way whatever, a system of devolution might still be carried out. It would be premature to go into the matter, in view of the forthcoming Report, but, at any rate, his view was that the opposition of the non-county boroughs ought not to stay action in regard to the question. He agreed with the hon. Member that the Local Government Board might leave to the Boards of Guardians the appointment of certain officers, but if the control of Poor Law work were in the hands of different counties, there would be different systems, and he doubted whether the House of Commons would consent to that. The County Councils now held inquiries as to the rearrangement of parish boundaries and the boundaries of rural and urban districts, and there was an appeal from their decision to the Local Government Board. The only inquiry the Local Government Board held was when a County Council proposed the alteration of a county boundary. As he had said a departmental Committee had been appointed to inquire into the organisation and work of the Local Government Board. It would meet after Easter to consider its report. Sir John Hibbert, the Chairman of the Lancashire County Council, was the Chairman of the Committee, and they could scarcely have anyone better. [" Hear, hear ! "] Evidence had been taken as to devolving certain of the work of the Board on local authorities. The question was receiving, not only careful, but sympathetic, consideration by the Committee, and more than that he would not be expected at present to say. [" Hear, hear ! "]

COUNTY COUNCILLORS' TRAVELLING EXPENSES (SCOTLAND).

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) had given notice of his intention to move the following Amendment :—

> " That, in the opinion of this House, provision should be made for the payment of the travelling expenses of county councillors in Scotland to and from their residences to attend the meetings of the council."

*Mr. SPEAKER ruled the Question out of order, as it did not refer to anything arising out of the Estimates, but to a matter which could only be dealt with by legislation.

FELON CONVICTS.

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) called attention to the circumstances under which a convict was killed by warders at Dartmoor Prison on Christmas Eve, and to the Standing Order of the Directors of Convict Prisons under which they purport to have acted. He had put several questions on the subject to the Home Secretary, and he complained of a want of courtesy on the part of the right hon. Gentleman in not being present, the subject being one in which he was concerned, and which he himself regarded as a matter of great importance. If the circumstances to which the Resolution referred had been the subject of any proper inquiry he would certainly not have troubled the House with it. But it had only been inquired into by a coroner's jury, and that at Princetown. He did not know whether hon. Members knew Princetown. But he had been there, and the place was almost entirely dependent on the prison. He was well aware that the Prisons Act of 1877 prescribed that no person having any trade relations with a prison should be on the jury of a coroner's inquest concerning the death of a convict, and he had no reason to suppose that the letter of the enactment was violated in this instance, but he thought the verdict of a coroner's jury at Princetown on a question in which the prison authorities were concerned could be of very little value. To have put the warders on their trial at the Devon Assizes would not only have been far more satisfactory to the public, but fairer to the men themselves, and then there would have been an opportunity for obtaining the opinion of the Court for Crown Cases Reserved on the application by the Home Office of an antiquated rule of the common law—a Court which, especially when the present Lord Chief Justice presided, had a robust way of disposing of such obsolete rules. Was the Standing Order itself complied with in this case? It prescribed :—

> " The first shot at least shall be wide of the mark, and if it is necessary again to fire the aim should be low."

But the evidence of the prison surgeon was that the liver and one lung of this unfortunate man were torn to pieces by no fewer than 13 slugs, and the convict witnesses swore that the warders were within 6ft. of the man when they fired, and they could have knocked him down with the butt end of their muskets. The Standing Order further prescribed:—

> "In cases of absolute necessity it is lawful to shoot at a felon convict if his escape cannot be otherwise prevented."

When the Home Secretary was challenged for his authority for this statement of the law, he fell back on the ancient rule of the common law that a felon in cases of necessity might be shot if his escape could not otherwise be prevented. But the Home Office had applied the rule to a condition of things which could not possibly have been contemplated in the remote time when the rule of the common law sprang up. It did not apply to a person who had been convicted, but only to a person trying to escape from justice and to avoid trial altogether. When the rule originated, punishment for every felony was substantially death; and in those days there was a strict relation between the risk a man ran who tried to avoid justice and the risk he ran if he submitted. Now felony might be punished with a few days' imprisonment; yet if a man attempted to escape from those few days his custodian was justified in shooting him dead. This showed how absurd it was to base the modern law on the ancient theory of the common law. There was another consideration which was well worth attention. There was some reason in the rule in ancient times, because if a man once got away, communication between one part of the country and another being difficult, the chances were that he would not be recaptured. But experience showed now that if a convict got away for a time he was absolutely certain in the end to be recaptured. Therefore this rule, even literally understood, did not apply in the circumstances of the present day. It had been said in the Press that this rule acted for the benefit of convicts, inasmuch as it enabled them to have more liberty than they would otherwise be able to enjoy. If the Standing Order were to be regarded as a favour, surely it ought to be extended to the misdemeanant as well as to the felon.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley) did not think the accusation of the hon. Member of want of courtesy against the Home Secretary was warranted. ["Hear, hear!"] The Home Secretary did not expect the Motion to come on so soon, and he assured the hon. Gentleman that the Home Secretary was the last person in or out of the House to treat anyone with a lack of courtesy. The hon. Member had suggested that the warders in this case should have been sent as criminals to stand their trial at the Devon Assizes. He knew Dartmoor better than the hon. Member. He knew the life of a warder in that forsaken place, in addition to the difficulties and the dangers of his office, and he could not refrain from thinking that the hon. Member had been rather hard on the warders. The post of warder in convict prisons was, in any circumstances, a very difficult and disagreeable one. Taken as a rule, their duties were discharged humanely, and in a manner unsurpassed by the prison officials of any other country. There had been a full inquiry into this question by means of a coroner's inquest. Speaking from recollection, he said that the inquiry was a full and complete one; and he thought his hon. Friend was wrong in supposing that Princetown was a place dependent on the prison. There were other industries there. It was, to some extent, an agricultural town, and there was a population independent of the prison. If there were no evidence to contradict the statement that the warder fired at the convict from a distance of six feet, he maintained that it was absolutely incredible to believe that a powerful warder, with a man within six feet of him, should not lay hold of the runaway instead of choosing to shoot him. But there was absolute evidence to contradict any statement of the kind, and it was given before the coroner's jury. Public opinion, which was likely to be alarmed by acts of violence, was apt to look with disfavour on an official who acted in a manner to inflict injury; but in this case the public opinion of all classes in the surrounding districts confirmed the finding of the jury, and it was proved that the escape could not otherwise be prevented. If a convict were to escape on Dartmoor he would soon escape from sight, owing to the nature of the ground; therefore the warder was obliged to act quickly or not at all. The House should remember also that all round Dartmoor there were isolated dwellings and defenceless people living unguarded, in the secure belief that the guardians of the peace would do their duty. It would be an alarming thing if a man of the dangerous character this convict was proved to be were allowed to be at large even for a short time. He did not quite remember the career of the convict during the short period of his escape, but he knew he did, in that brief time, break into and enter residences, and if he had been resisted, perhaps violence or even murder might have ensued. It was as necessary now as in the olden times that convicts should not be at large or escape for even a period of 24 hours; therefore, in the interest of public safety, and in the interests of the defenceless dwellers in the neighbouring places, the action of the warder should be vindicated. Even if there had been an error of judgment on the part of the warder, he thought, considering the difficult circumstances in which the officer was placed, that error was entitled to their kindest consideration rather than adverse criticism. He maintained that, according to all the evidence, there had been no departure from what might be regarded as the duty of the warder, in his criticism upon whom the hon. Member had been a little hard. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would now consider he had received adequate information on the subject. As to his request that there should be a Departmental Committee to inquire into the whole circumstances, he was not in a position to answer for his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, but he did not think there was the least chance of his granting such a Committee.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) rather regretted, now that they had Committees and Commissions to inquire into every possible subject, that the hon. Gentleman had been unable to hold out hope that there should be a Committee on a question in which human life was concerned. When they put arms into everybody's hands, there was always a great difficulty in knowing how the weapons would be used—whether they would shoot people satisfactorily or not, in the right place, or at the right distance. He himself did not think they could really do much for the protection of prisoners who attempted to escape, whatever steps they adopted. Sir Edmund Henderson told him that some years ago a number of convicts were shot while trying to escape, and the authorities issued orders to the warders that when prisoners attempted to run away they should fire "wide." A few weeks after a warder wrote to his superiors:—

> "I beg to report that last Tuesday No. 27 tried to escape, on which, according to orders, I fired wide and hit him in the back."

[*Laughter.*]

TELEPHONE SERVICE.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) rose to call attention to the unsatisfactory and imperfect condition of the telephone service in the metropolis. He asserted that, as compared with other places London was badly served, the cost of telephonic connection was great, the delays in the transmission of messages serious, and the whole system not very creditable to the greatest commercial city in the world. The answer to the statement of the Post Office that they did not receive such complaints was that the people of London hardly knew that the Post Office was the place to complain to. The complaints were sent to the National Telephone Company, and if they could only produce these documents the House would be very much surprised both at the number of complaints and the correspondence which took place on the subject. However satisfied the Telephone Company might be with their service, that satisfaction was not generally shared, and complaints were sent in from time to time of the wretched service that was accorded the subscribers. The hon. Member proceeded to quote from letters sent by numerous merchants and others in different parts of London, supporting this statement. He was aware the National Telephone Company would say that the real difficulty was to get wayleaves for the wires. There was no doubt a difficulty there, but he was not concerned with the Telephone Company, his contention being that by some means or other there should be an efficient, rapid, and economical telephone service in London. Whilst saying nothing against the present company, he did not see why the whole of London should be subservient to one company, believing there was ample room for two. Whether that was so or not, he submitted that the Post Office, as responsible in these matters ought at once to insure a more efficient and more economical service, and not wait until 1911 when this contract expired. He believed the only real solution of the problem would be found to be in providing that the wires should practically pass underground rather than overhead. He felt, however, that every delay only made the matter more difficult of settlement. Every year the telephone was coming more and more into general use, and they saw overhead perfect masses of wires in all directions. He himself thought many of these were extremely dangerous, that they would some day come down in a storm and lead to serious results. It was not his place to suggest how the better service was to be effected, but he asserted that even in some of the provincial towns the telephonic communication was carried out much better than in London. It did not seem to him at all creditable to the Post Office, who were really responsible, that the present unsatisfactory system should be allowed to continue indefinitely. He believed the Secretary to the Treasury was fully alive to the importance of this matter, and, for his own part, he was certain that the mere drawing attention to the subject in the House would tend to bring about some change which all commercial men desired. There was no doubt whatever that the system of ringing up communications was very complicated and tedious, many men found the telephone was not nearly of the use to them that it ought to be, and there was a growing opinion that something should speedily be done to make the communication both more efficient and cheaper. What was far more important than cheapness was that telephone communication should be obtained at once when required, that when a person wanted a telephone on his premises he should be able to get it in a short time, in a few days or weeks, and should not have as now to wait for months. This was not a convenient time to enter upon a long discussion of the subject, but he had taken advantage of this as the only opportunity he was likely to find to mention the matter shortly, and he hoped some statement would be made by the Secretary to the Treasury to show that the Post Office was alive to the importance of the subject, and would not allow this company to grow into a huge monopoly, so that in a few years it would be impossible to touch it, but by competition of other companies or of the Post Office itself the commercial part of London and, if possible, the residential part of London also might have an efficient system of telephone communication, such as small town in America enjoy. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said it was always an invidious thing for a Member to address the House on a question in which he was personally interested, and he desired in the first place to say he was a director of the National Telephone Company, and, as such, desired to offer some explanation to the House upon the case put forward by his hon. Friend. He was himself largely responsible for the difficulties, and they were many, which prevented the Company making the service what it ought to be, and what they desired it should be, for it was his business when Postmaster General to devise a system by which the telegraph revenue of the country should not be injured by the competition of the telephone, while at the same time better facilities should be given to the several companies, licensees of the Post Office, to develop the telephone system. At that time virtually there was only one company to deal with, and negotiations extended pretty well over the whole time of his term of office. Arrangements were made for safeguarding the telegraphs, and, on the other hand, concessions were made to the company for providing an efficient telephone service. The whole of the proceedings were made known to the House, the arrangements were embodied in a Treasury Minute, and referred to a Select Committee. While on the one hand the trunk wires were by agreement to be purchased by the Government, on the other hand, obstacles in the way of the company securing sufficient wayleaves were partly removed. But to safeguard the interests of the public he refused to sanction the creation of anything like a monopoly, and the

Post Office had the right to issue new licences for the establishment of telephonic exchanges if the service were not satisfactory. It was also thought absolutely necessary that the company should not have the power to take its wires wherever it thought proper without the consent of local authorities or individuals in respect to private property. This latter condition had been found the chief difficulty in the way of the National Telephone Company giving the best service possible, because in many cases local authorities had been slow to give the necessary facilities for laying the wires underground, which was the only efficient system, and individual owners had often been very exacting in the terms upon which they would allow wires to cross their premises. Such was the cause of much of the delay intending subscribers had found in getting telephonic communication with their premises to which his hon. Friend had referred. In one particular case, where subscribers in a set of mansions desired and had not yet obtained connection, he knew the circumstances. It was a set of mansions in Victoria Street, and the difficulty was that wayleaves could not be secured to bring the wires into the mansions, and successive difficulties occurred in this respect. Moreover, the owner of the mansions was very exacting, and required as a condition a telephone free of charge. With the number of places through which wires had to be brought, to undertake to allow the free use of an instrument was a method upon which not even the Post Office could afford to do business. There was a great difference in the position of the Post Office as compared with that of a private company, for under the Act which he introduced the Post Office could exercise power over local authorities who declined to give due facilities by an appeal to the Railway Commission, thus overruling the local authority, but a company had no such power. This led to delay in providing intending subscribers with connections. But he was glad to say this difficulty would be in time removed, for, after long negotiation, the County Council had entered into an agreement with the company, by which the wires would be laid underground everywhere, and there would ultimately be a disappearance of that network of wires crossing the streets which his hon. Friend regarded with apprehension, with much greater facilities for giving subscribers the wires they desired. When his hon. Friend talked of the inefficiency of the London service it was only right to mention that there were a very large number of subscribers in London, and especially in the City, where they numbered nearly 4,000, and he was informed that upon an average each subscriber used the telephone twelve times a day, which seemed to indicate that the service was found to be very convenient. The fact was that in every town except London arrangements had been made for placing wires underground, and thus a more efficient service could be given. He hoped that before long London would be as well off. The company was not very popular just now because of the impression that it held a monopoly, but it was really not a monopoly and the company could only hold its position on condition that the service was well done, and it could only be justified by there being a ready means of redress if the service were not efficient. He was careful when he was responsible for the public interest to see that no monopoly was established that could not immediately be interfered with either by the Post Office granting new licences or setting up their own exchanges where the service supplied by the company was inefficient. The company was not at all dissatisfied with that arrangement, and was doing its very best to give a liberal service. His hon. Friend talked about the parsimony of the company—

MR. BARTLEY said he was quoting a letter from one of the persons complaining.

SIR J. FERGUSSON said it was only fair to say that within the last three years the company had expended in London £300,000 in converting the original single wire system into a duplicate wire system, and within the same period complaints had been reduced by 80 per cent. The many complaints formerly were due to the want of facilities on the part of the company, and to the faulty system established in early days. There was now every probability of a proper and efficient system, but if the company failed in this the Post Office had reserved the power of providing a remedy.

*Mr. EDWIN LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro) said the Post Office would not be justified at the present time in undertaking any very large expenditure in the direction indicated, because there was or would be soon before the public a new system of telegraphy quite different from the contact system, and without any connecting wires whatever. This new, or Röntgen ray, form of telegraph, he believed, was quite practicable, and he understood application had been made for permission to place two instruments within the precincts of the House, so that Members might have an opportunity of testing the invention for themselves. Without connecting wires it had been found possible to convey messages through London. The inventor was quite young, under 25 years of age, and invented the system six months ago, since which he had brought it into such a form as to convince nearly every man of intelligence who had examined it of the practicability of the system by which a message could be conveyed for a distance of ten or twenty miles. Should it ultimately prove successful this would entirely revolutionise the whole system of telegraphy and telephony, and, meanwhile, it would not be wise for the Post Office to undertake large expenditure on the existing system.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston) was not surprised at the demand for a telephone service for London equal to the services to be found in much smaller towns on the Continent and in America. The London area dealt with by the National Telephone Company was, he thought, something like 600 square miles, and, of course, the service of the company within that area was at present practically a monopoly—for the present at any rate. A good telephone service, as his hon. Friend had said, was one of the necessities of business at the present day, and he was afraid it was a fact that at present England, in regard to telephone service, was not up to the level of some foreign countries. ["Hear, hear!"] He could assure his hon. Friend that the Government were fully alive to the considerations he had mentioned, and fully determined that the country should have an adequate telephonic service. One of the earliest steps, one of the most useful steps to be taken, was that he mentioned the other day in answer to a question when he stated that whenever there was a strong *primâ facie* case of a grievance, the Government were perfectly prepared to institute an independent inquiry by a barrister or expert wholly unconnected with the Government or the Post Office, the inquiry to be conducted in public, and if in the result it should be shown that the existing service was too costly or was inefficient, then they would feel called upon to exercise their right to institute a rival service; whether that should be under the Corporation or a local body, or of the Post Office, would of course depend on the circumstances of the case. There would be inconvenience in having two systems in the same town, although there was something of the kind at Newcastle and at Cardiff, and it must necessarily be convenient for all subscribers to have one communication. One conclusion, at any rate, the Government had arrived at, and that was that they would not buy out the existing National Telephone Company. They had such a lesson with regard to the purchase of the telegraphs that they were certainly not likely to repeat the error. ["Hear, hear!"] But that in itself was not a sufficient way of meeting the case, for undoubtedly the National Telephone Company would go on extending their system in many directions, and unless the Post Office, either through exchanges of its own or through those of corporations, put itself in a position to take over and work the telephonic communication of the country when the concession to the National Telephone Company ceased in 1911, they would be in a very considerable dilemma, and might have to buy the company out at their own price. But that, again, was a danger which they certainly did not intend to incur. At any rate, in regard to London, the complaints with regard to the telephone service that had reached the Post Office had been very few, but it must be remembered that the Post Office had no means of ascertaining officially what the company was doing, and he did not think the public yet realised that in the last resort the appeal was to the Post Office. He was bound to say that the decrease in the number of complaints was a considerable tribute to the way in which the company was doing its work. Up to 1893 there were numerous complaints of the cost of the service and the difficulty of communication, but in that year the company began to extend the twin-wire system, which, except in a few outlying districts, was now in use throughout the metropolis. At the same time, the cost to private houses was reduced from £20 to £10, and, although the charge to places of business was maintained, facilities were given for contracting for five years, and in that case the charge was reduced from £20 to £17. No considerable complaint had been made of these charges, and he did not think they could be said to be excessive. In 1895, when the Select Committee was sitting, complaints were made by the Corporation of London and the London County Council, chiefly as to the difficulty of hearing the messages and of getting into communication. These difficulties had been so far got over that he understood the London County Council was now anxious to co-operate with the company. If the County Council gave the company facilities for carrying its wires underground a great advance would have been made. He did not think his right hon. Friend was right in saying that the County Council had the absolute right to give permission to take up the streets. It rested, in the first instance, with the vestries, and in the City with the Commissioners of Sewers; but, if they refused, the County Council could take them before a magistrate, and then before the Railway Commissioners, and the onus of proof lay upon them to show that their conduct in refusing was reasonable. At present any complaints of the telephone service arose from the difficulty the company had in procuring wayleaves. So far as the overhead wires were concerned, they were entirely dependent upon the written permission of private owners. This difficulty had very largely impeded their work, and he hoped, with the co-operation of the County Council, it might be removed by the adoption of a system of underground wires, which, after all, was a much better system than any system of overhead wires. As to the question how far the company had endeavoured to meet the requirements of London, he found that it had about 16,000 subscribers, of whom 7,000 were in the City. It was a fair proof of the satisfaction the company was giving in the City that of 29,000 occupiers 25 per cent. were subscribers. There were in London 150 call offices, where persons who were not subscribers could use the wires for a small charge. The number of these offices, he thought, was rather small. The company had not yet carried out the conditions imposed upon them two or three years ago, but he was informed that they were taking long strides towards getting over that part of the ground. It was the determination of the Government that they should have effective telephonic communication, not only in London, but throughout the length and breadth of the land. ["Hear, hear!"] They could not afford, as a great business nation, to fall behind other nations. He could go further, and say it was not the intention of the Post Office to sacrifice the telephones to the telegraphs—["hear, hear!"]—and wherever, on complaint, it was found that there was a *primâ facie* case that the service of the National Telephone Company was inefficient or too costly, they would institute a public and independent inquiry, and, if the case was proved, they would set up another service in its place. ["Hear, hear!"]

CRETE.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he had put down a Motion asking the House to express the disapproval which was felt outside the House of the action of Her Majesty's Government in firing on the Cretans and the Greeks, and in blockading Crete. By the Rules of the House, however, he was precluded from bringing the matter to a vote, and as the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had already spoken and could not speak again, he should not go at all exhaustively into the subject. There were, however, two or three things he wished to point out. They had really great difficulty in finding out what was going on and what was the policy of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] He would not say there was absolute evasion, but practically the outcome of the answers they addressed to the Government was that they knew as little when they had received the answers as they did before. When they pointed to facts that had taken place, according to the accounts of journalists—and he was not taking journalists who were opposed to the Government, but the correspondents of *The Times* and of *The Standard*—they were told by the Under Secretary that the Admirals had not seen the matter in the same way, and that they must attach no credibility to the correspondents. He was far from saying that there might not be sometimes exaggeration in the correspondents' messages, but when they had three or four correspondents not opposed to the Government giving the same statement of what occurred and of what they had seen with their own eyes there must be a considerable measure of truth in what they said. Under these circumstances they found a difficulty in dealing with the matter on the *data* of admitted facts. There was a certain amount of point in the suggestion of the First Lord of the Treasury that they should at once proceed to a Vote of Censure, but the answer to that was that they did not know what was the policy of Her Majesty's Government. It seemed to him that, according to all Parliamentary precedents, when important actions like these were taking place, and where the Government were urging the matter to be met by a Vote of Censure, they ought to put the House in as full and as complete possession of what was going on and what they contemplated as was possible. That, he complained, the Government had not done. ["Hear, hear!"] What had happened in the last two or three days? At Malaxa it was admitted there was a conflict. The allied fleets and the Turkish fleet there fired indiscriminately both on the Turks and the Christians. Surely that was the most reckless act that could possibly have been done. ["Hear, hear!"] To the best of their knowledge the Cretans were not notified that there was any intention to fire upon them, and certainly the Turks were not. Again, what took place at Retimo was really a disgrace to war itself. There the Russian Consul invited a conference with certain chiefs of the insurgents. The chiefs came to this conference with a flag of truce, and at once they were fired upon by the Bashi-Bazouks! What happened then? When the Admirals had complaint to make of the Greeks they fired into them, but, as far as he could find out, nothing was done against the Bashi-Bazouks when they did a thing which was not recognised even by barbarous tribes as legitimate, except that a protest was made at Constantinople! [*Laughter.*] Take what occurred at Candano, when Sir A. Biliotti managed to release the Turks there, and bring them to Canea. They found from the newspapers that these men had been armed by the Turks, and were engaged with our troops in defending Canea against the insurgents. In a speech at Norwich the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said that we were on the side of the Turks, and that the Greeks were on the side of the insurgents. Was that not textually true? It had been stated officially that, if the present Measures were not successful, the Allied Powers would proceed to other action. What other action? It seemed to him that the Powers could not make up their minds what it was. One day it was said that some mountain batteries were to be sent; another day it was said the Piræus was to be blockaded; another day it was stated that the Gulf of Volo was to be blockaded; another day it was announced that the Turkish troops were going to retire from Crete. This evening the Under Secretary said that we were urging at Constantinople that the Turkish troops should retire from Crete, but he did not say that this was to be preliminary to any threat or determination to blockade any port in Greece, nor did he state whether the six Powers were united on the subject. He could not find that the Powers were united on anything except on some act of oppression or war against the Greeks. ["Hear, hear!"] The fact was that they were so jealous of each other that they could not be brought into line to act in a reasonable and practical manner. It was stated in the newspapers to-day that Colonel Vassos, whom he took to be a truthful and honourable man, had sent a protest to the Admirals. Was that protest to be answered? They were told that all this was occurring in order to give the Cretans the benefit of self-government—autonomy it was called. It seemed to him that to kill people was a curious way of giving them an opportunity of governing themselves. What the Cretans wanted was to be separated entirely from the Turks, and the reply they received was, "We will give you autonomy." Again and again he and others had asked what was the nature of the autonomy. The newspapers stated that the Ambassadors had declared that they were unable to elaborate any scheme of autonomy. The Cretans, therefore, were to give up their arms and all hope of being connected with Greece, on the understanding that they were to receive some vague and indefinite autonomy. The Government would no doubt say that if they left the Cretans to fight matters out for themselves they would come worse off. But how did they know that? He and his Friends believed that the time had come when England should withdraw from the Concert of Europe. They did not believe that the Government were representing fairly the opinion of the country—["hear, hear!"]—in fighting for the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and in turning English guns upon the Cretans, who were fighting to escape from a connection with that empire. It was perfectly true the Government had a majority in that House, but did they obtain that majority at the general election by advocating the policy of defending the integrity of the Turkish Empire? The Government were now blockading Crete with the deliberate intention of starving it into submission. He regretted he was unable to take the opinion of the House. He had always thought that on his own side of the House they entertained a strong opinion with regard to what the Government was doing, and that they ought to accept the challenge of the Government and move a Vote of Censure. [*Ministerial laughter.*] He could perfectly understand that the wise and eminent Gentlemen who sat upon the Front Opposition Bench—[*Ministerial laughter, the Front Opposition Bench being empty*]—desired to choose their own time. After the belligerent speeches they had had from the Member for Montrose and the Leader of the Opposition, he was firmly convinced they would find the wishes of the Leader of the House gratified, and that before the Easter vacation they should have those Gentlemen moving a Vote of Censure. [The First Lord of the Treasury: "Hear, hear!"] He had no doubt that the reason why they were not there that night was that they were preparing that Vote of Censure. [*Laughter.*] As an humble follower he did not think they would fulfil their duties to the Liberals in and out of that House unless they moved a Vote of Censure. Of course they knew that they would be beaten. He thought, however, that it would have a great effect outside this country if it was known that the entire Liberal Party—[*loud laughter*]—well, they would admit that the Liberal Party constituted a large section of the people of this country, and if it was made clear that the Liberal Party as a whole was prepared and did challenge the action of the Government, it would have a great effect abroad. It would be seen that this country was split into two parties, and Lord Salisbury, who was a man of considerable intelligence—[*ironical Ministerial laughter*]—when he did not allow himself to be led by those who had not his intelligence—[*Opposition laughter*]—would say, "I am the Minister of England, not the Minister of Russia or of France or of Germany, and I will act as the Minister of England, and in accordance with the views of the English people." [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.), who was received with Ministerial cheers: It is not for me to say what is the duty or what is not the duty of right hon. Gentlemen opposite in dealing with the question, but if it be their duty to make perpetual protests against the foreign policy of the Government, nobody has acted up to that profession more laudably than the hon. Gentleman himself. It has been said of a great preacher, Whitefield, that he had delivered the same sermon 40 times and that the 40th delivery was the best. I do not say that the hon. Member has made the same speech 40 times on the subject of Crete, nor do I say that his last utterance was the best. [*Laughter.*] At all events, he has shown perseverance in well doing, which ought to earn the gratitude of the small fragment of his own Party who have thought it worth while to come down to the House. [*Laughter.*] I do not mean to detain the House at any great length on the foreign policy of the Government, more especially as we have received a half pledge from the hon. Gentleman on behalf of his absent leaders—

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Yes, "hope springs eternal in the human breast." I only hope they will do it. [*Loud laughter.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I gather at all events from the hon. Member, who is naturally deeper in the confidence of those who are sometimes on the Front Opposition Bench—[*laughter*]—than myself, that the general intention is that a Vote of Censure shall be moved in the course of next week. [*Ministerial cheers.*] If this be so, we shall welcome such an opportunity of defending our policy and taking a vote of the representatives of the people upon that policy. It is sufficient to say, in the meanwhile, that he has entirely failed to comprehend the importance of the events which are going on before our eyes in Crete at this moment. He appears to think that there is a series of acts of wanton aggression on the part of the Turks, backed up by the Powers of Europe, against the peaceable and unoffending citizens of Crete and their Grecian allies. ["Hear, hear!"] That, I gather, is a true rendering of what he means. The facts, however, are somewhat different. The facts are, that the Powers of Europe are occupied in defending a portion of the Greek population of Crete, who are Mahomedans in religion, from the attacks of those who belong to the same race but not the same religion —["hear, hear"]—and that the whole action of the Powers during the recent weeks has been to defend against the insurgents and their allies certain positions which, if taken by the insurgents, would imperil not merely the maritime ports, but the honour and the lives of the Cretan population of Mahomedan religion. That is described by the hon. Gentleman as England fighting on behalf of the Turks. [*Opposition cheers.*] Surely it requires an Irishman to cheer that. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Why are Irishmen to be insulted?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The hon. Gentleman knows very well that I am the last person in the House to underrate his capacity for expressing himself clearly and forcibly on anything he may desire to discuss; but I do say that to describe these operations as fighting on behalf of the Turks is the most inaccurate and inappropriate use of the English language. [*Cheers.*] My right hon. Friend near me the Under Secretary has already told the House that we desire the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, and we have no doubt that that withdrawal will take place. He has also told the House, and I and other Members of the Government have told the House, that the policy of the Government is to withdraw Crete altogether, not from the suzerainty, but from the power, of the Sultan, and to give to Crete complete power of controlling her own affairs as far as the Porte is concerned. It is tolerable that such a policy as that should be described as fighting for the Turks? [*Cheers.*] Our policy may be right or it may be wrong, but let the language applied to it be accurate, and describe the true facts of the case. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman asks what is autonomy? And he appears to think that we have no right to talk of autonomy for Crete unless we are prepared to lay on the Table of the House a brand new constitution of local government, complete in all its details from the smallest to the largest. Sir, autonomy means self-government. ["Hear, hear"] The autonomy the Powers of Europe mean to give to Crete is the power of self-government free from interference on the part of the Porte. It is true that the Powers of Europe are resolved that there shall not be at this moment a scramble for fragments of the Turkish Empire, and, in forming that resolution and carrying it out, we consider that we are not merely not fighting against the cause of civilisation and freedom, but that we are fighting for civilisation and freedom and for the peace of Europe. [*Cheers.*] But let not that policy—a policy which Mr. Gladstone has in his time supported by Measures not less forcible against Greece than those we are employing—let not that policy be described as fighting for the Turkish rule or the Turkish Empire in Europe. [*Cheers.*] We have no such views or desires. I have before endeavoured to describe the policy of the Government as freedom for Crete and peace for Europe. That the first of these objects will be attained I have not the slightest doubt. I wish I could speak with equal confidence with regard to the second; but if I cannot speak with equal confidence of the prospects of peace, this I say with full assurance, that no better course for maintaining that peace can be conceived than the course we are pursuing of maintaining the Concert of Europe, and preventing that general fight for the provinces of Turkey in Europe which must end in a flow of blood and an amount of human misery which it is difficult to estimate and impossible to describe, and which will not, we believe, curtail for one moment or prevent for one instant the gradual spread of free institutions and of settled government over all the provinces occupied by Christians in the Eastern part of Europe. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that during the long months that had passed by, while they had been pursuing their present policy, the Government had not thought it worth while to take the House into their confidence and to justify their policy. The right hon. Gentleman said that in this matter the British Government was not allied to the Turks. Would the right hon. Gentleman deny the allegation of his hon. Friend that while reinforcements were being denied to the insurgents, under the protection of Her Majesty's ships, the Turks were daily receiving munitions and reinforcements? ["Hear, hear!"] In the face of such a position it was idle to tell the House that the Government were not acting as protectors of the Turks in this matter. The insurgents were fighting their own battles against the Turks, and when they were successful Her Majesty's ship *Camperdown* fired shells into their midst. ["Hear, hear!"] No Member of the Government had yet denied that, and again he said, it was idle and absurd to say we were not acting as the protectors of the Turks. The right hon. Gentleman asked what was autonomy? It meant that a people should be allowed to govern themselves in the way they thought best for themselves; but that was exactly the opposite to what the Government of the right hon. Gentleman was carrying out in Crete. The Cretans had expressed a desire to be united with Greece, and if any respect were to be paid to the principle of self-government, that desire ought to be recognised. The principal point on which complaint was made against the Government was that they had not the courage or the power to insist on the Turkish troops being withdrawn. He believed that if the Turkish troops had been withdrawn and the troops of the Powers placed in the island there would have been no danger of war. It was quite clear that Lord Salisbury and the Government recognised the importance of the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, but we were so impotent in this Concert of Europe that the Government had not been allowed to carry out that policy. The Government challenged a Vote of Censure, the Party advantage of which they all foresaw—[*Ministerial cheers*]—but hon. Gentlemen opposite were not returned at the last election to support the integrity of the Turkish Empire, neither were they sent there to support the firing of shells into the midst of the poor people of Crete. Their Party majority was secured for other reasons, and this question had not been before the country. They could not therefore be considered to represent the opinion of the people of this country in this matter, and the feeling outside was strong enough to considerably reduce their majority. He regretted that the Government had not been able to succeed in carrying out the policy of withdrawing the Turkish troops, which he believed was their desire.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the speeches to which they had listened had not been attacks on the Government, but attacks on the Leaders of the Liberal Party and the Concert of Europe. No public man had more strongly protested that it was necessary in these matters to act with the Concert of Europe than had Lord Rosebery. No Government had more strongly held that opinion than the Government which in 1886 blockaded the Piræus and thereby protected Turkey from the attacks of Greece and caused Greece to withdraw the forces she had sent forth to make war on the Turkish Empire. There was an example if the Government needed one, but the present Government had not gone nearly so far as had the Government of 1886. As soon as they blockaded the Piræus Greece would come to her senses, and not till then; and then, as in 1886, she would obey the mandate of the Concert of Europe. In the meantime they were in Crete endeavouring to keep the peace between the two sets of combatants. It was constantly said that the Cretans were mad to be united to Greece, but when he was in Athens in November he had been told by several Cretans that they did not want to be united to Greece, because they knew perfectly well that if they once came under the Greek flag their taxes would be five times higher than they were now. The fact was, the great desire of the Cretans was to fight out their grievances among themselves. He read an extract from a letter of a young naval officer now employed on the coast of Greece, which showed that the desire of the Cretans was simply to fight it out amongst themselves. There was an old English proverb that he who parted the fray went away with the blows. This country was rather in that position now. The hon. Member for Northampton had made some very severe strictures on his absent chief. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: "No."] He thought those attacks should be made when the right hon. Gentleman was there to defend himself. There was only the late Solicitor General for Scotland on the Front Opposition Bench. He quoted a speech delivered by the junior hon. Member for Devonport at Lynn, in the unavoidable absence of himself—[*laughter*]—in which the hon. Member said that Sir William Harcourt was willing to declare, if he was not hampered by those traitors who sat around—[*laughter*]—that he and the Liberal Party were anxious to destroy the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, even as a figment of international law, and to smash the Concert of Europe. However difficult the task to which it had set itself, the Concert of Europe was the only thing that at present stood between Europe and a general war. He admitted that the Cretan phase of the task to which the Concert of Europe had set itself was being attempted under circumstances of great risk and danger. He thought, himself, that although the Concert of Europe had the right to keep the peace, there was great risk run in landing in Crete detachments of different nations, speaking different languages, having different military systems, and congregating them together under one single commander. So long as they were not attacked by the insurgents, well and good. But if they were exposed to attacks by the insurgents, they would run great risk of disaster indeed. But he put it to the Liberal Party that it would be better for their own dignity to stop this constant snapping and snarling at the Concert of Europe, and the policy of Her Majesty's Government—which was honest, however imprudent some of them may deem it to be—and to raise the question in a proper manner so that the House might once and for all give its decision upon it.

DISTRESS (MAYO).

MR. DANIEL CRILLY (Mayo, N.) had given notice to move:—

"That as the provisions of the ordinary Poor Law have proved altogether inadequate to meet the exceptional distress which prevails in the Unions of Belmullet and Killala, in the northern division of Mayo, and as it is shown by the resolutions of the local representative bodies, and by the rapid and dangerous weekly increase in the extent and cost of outdoor relief in the Belmullet Union, that this distress is assuming alarming proportions, it is the duty of the Government to come to the immediate assistance of the people by providing special relief,"

He said there had been absolute and considerable failure on the part of the officials of the Local Government Board of Ireland in giving the Chief Secretary full and accurate representations on the true state of affairs in certain portions of the west of Ireland. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman, did he know what was going on at the present time in the west of Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman had consistently denied the existence of distress in the west of Ireland, though that distress was acute and dangerous; and, if the Local Government Board did not take the necessary steps to meet it, the consequences might be terrible. The potato crop had failed, and the people were not simply on the verge of starvation, they were already starving. As the potato crop failed, the supply of Indian meal must increase. On the 22nd February, in answer to a question, the right hon. Gentleman said:—

"We have no reason to anticipate general distress of a nature requiring the exceptional expedient of relief works, and it is expected that any cases of distress which may arise can be dealt with under the Poor Law system."

On the 9th February, the right hon. Gentleman said:—

"The Report of the Commissioner of the Local Government Board has been received, and I have also had the advantage of a personal interview with him on the subject. The result is to confirm the conclusion already arrived at, that there is no reason at present to anticipate that opening of relief works will become necessary in any part of the Union."

Both the present Chief Secretary and the Leader of the House had become familiar with the parish priest of Belmullet, Father Hewson, and they knew that he would not lend himself to extravagant statement. He said :—

> "The traders of Belmullet would be in a position to prove that the distress exists, inasmuch as from the end of November up to the present time the consumption of Indian meal in the districts which they supply has increased eighteen-fold beyond the normal consumption in other years."

He had received replies from a number of the chief merchants of Belmullet whom the right hon. Gentleman had also met. Mr. John Murphy stated that while from 1st November 1895 to March 25th 1896, he only sold 30 bags of Indian meal, in the corresponding period of 1896-97 he sold 1,150 bags. Mr. James O'Donoghue, last year only sold four tons of Indian meal, while this year he sold 40 tons. Mr. John Lennahan declared that the quantity of Indian meal he had sold during three months was fifteen times greater than in the corresponding period of the previous year. When the right hon. Gentleman went over there he met with a splendid reception from the people there, simply because they expected something from him which they never received. [*Laughter.*] It was all very well for right hon. Gentlemen to come down to their poor western districts, and in the light of great receptions to make promises, and when they came back to this House, basking in the full sunshine of their past popularity, to forget the promises they made. They could think of Crete or Armenia; they forgot those things conveniently when they left Ireland. But there was one awkward fact in the situation, that while they forgot their promises Irishmen did not. Mr. James Mills, Chairman of the Belmullet Board of Guardians, in the three months from November 1895, sold 40 bags, and these last three months 300 bags. He passed away from these proofs of the failure of the potato crop to point to another fact which they would not escape from. He answered him on 25th January :—

> "I may point out that there are at the present time fewer inmates in the Belmullet workhouse than was the case last month, and considerably fewer than at the corresponding period of the previous year."

The right hon. Gentleman knew very well in making that statement the reason why; he knew that the west of Ireland peasant would starve and die on his little plot before he would enter the workhouse. But the right hon. Gentle- was cautiously careful—he would not say ingeniously careful—to avoid giving to the House the statistics of outdoor relief. He would give the official figures relating to outdoor relief for seven weeks in the Belmullet Union. On January 30th last, 71 persons received outdoor relief at a cost of £4. 6s. 10d. against 37 at a cost of £2. 5s. 6d. in the corresponding period of last year. On February 27th, 275 persons were relieved at a cost of £11. 18s. 9d. against 58 at a cost of £3. 11s. 6d. in the same week of last year. On March 6th, 372 were relieved at a cost of £14. 11s. 7d. On March 13th, 530 were relieved at a cost of £18. 2s. 9d. against only 55 relieved in the same week last year. On March 20th, 662 were relieved at a cost of £23. 18s. 10d. against only 51 at a cost of £3. 8s. 1d. in the same week last year. The figures showed that last year the two unions were in a normal condition. But this year the potato crop had failed, and unless the Government came to the rescue of these poor people they must starve and die.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) thought that the attack made by the hon. Member on the Local Government Board was not justified. It was inaccurate to say that the Local Government Board had not kept him closely and carefully informed of the condition of things in this part of the west of Ireland. He had been in constant communication with the Board, and had received reports again and again. Every fortnight he was supplied with elaborate reports as to what was going on in these seaboard unions. He had never denied that there was distress in those unions or in other unions in the west of Ireland, but he had said that the condition of things there was not such as, in his opinion, to call for the exceptional remedy of relief works. He was not prepared to deny that the distress at Belmullet was very considerable, and perhaps during the next few months was likely to increase. Distress in the west of Ireland was generally of a sporadic kind, and existed only in certain black spots. Relief works were expensive and elaborate machinery for dealing with the difficulty. Since 1880 relief works had been started five times, and they were not a desirable method of dealing with distress if it were possible to deal with it in another way. Undoubtedly they had a demoralising side; and what he felt was, that if this remedy were resorted to, the result would be that whenever a season rather less good than usual occurred, the people would always expect relief works, and would not make provision in a good for a bad season. ["Hear, hear!"] Having regard to the fact that the distress was of a sporadic character, and to the strong objections which might be urged against the adoption of this particular remedy, the Government had resolved, so far as possible, to rely upon the operations of the Poor Law. Of course he foresaw at a comparatively early period that it might be necessary to relax the conditions of out-door relief in the unions to which the hon. Member had referred, and as a matter of fact they had been done. ["Hear, hear!"] He was still of opinion that it would not be necessary to establish relief works in this district. If they did, the cry for relief works for other unions when the potato crop was not so copious as usual would become almost irresistible. The hon. Member had accused him of making a promise to the people of Belmullet which he had not fulfilled. He made no promise at all, except that he would carefully consider the representations which were made to him. ["Hear, hear!"] While he freely admitted there was distress in Belmullet, he thought it was not impossible that the representations made to him by the boards of guardians and other bodies had been undoubtedly influenced by a natural desire on the part of the people in that part to have a railway constructed for them at the Government's expense. He had not seen his way to undertake to say that a railway should be constructed, but the Government were making preparations for the establishment of a steamer service between Belmullet and Achill, which would involve the construction of piers and approaches. He hoped this work would be shortly commenced, and, so far as it went, it would contribute to the relief of the existing distress. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course the condition of affairs in this and other unions would continue to be carefully watched. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. M. HEALY was quite sure that as far as he was personally concerned the right hon. Gentlemen was carefully watching the conditions of these unions, and he was equally satisfied that he would be totally unable to provide a remedy. The only remedy he could see was for the right hon. Gentleman to send round the allied fleet to bombard the district.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Who is making a joke of Irish distress now?

MR. T. M. HEALY said that by that means, and by the expenditure of a few thousand pounds worth of powder, they would be able to get rid of the entire inhabitants of these districts, who could thus be removed off the face of the earth. England had fired the price of more shells into Crete than would relieve the entire distress in the Belmullet Union. He was not himself acquainted with gunnery practice, but he had seen it stated in the newspapers that every time one of these big ships fired a broadside, it cost about £600, of which Ireland had to pay one-tenth. It was perfectly true the right hon. Gentleman had established, or was thinking of establishing, not a railway which would give the people the work of navvying, but a line of steamers from Achill to Belmullet. Between the poorest place on the Irish seaboard and a still more impoverished island in the Atlantic there was to be a service of steamers. It would be as valuable as a telephone service between Purgatory and a still warmer quarter. [*Laughter.*] What the people of Belmullet had to ship to Achill but black potatoes, or the people of Achill to ship to Belmullet but the same commodity, was more than he could understand. All this time the right hon. Gentleman talked of Poor Law relief, but if Ireland had the proportion of relief for her rates that rich England received under the Rating Act, if she had the value of the shells hurled at Crete, then there would be plenty of Irish money for the relief of these miserable unions in the west of Ireland. Under the English Rating Act, relief was given to rich Durham and prosperous Yorkshire, but there was none for the unfortunate people of Achill. The sum Ireland did get, £160,000, was tied up, or impounded, to be spent he understood in the salaries of a Board of Agriculture in Dublin. ["Hear, hear!"] There were boards enough in Dublin Castle, and wooden heads enough to supply a forest. [*Laughter.*] So far as he understood, the people of Belmullet were to "see the British fleet at anchor," not in the shape of war ships, but as represented by a service of steamers, and they would get such gratification as they could out of watching the smoke trail as the vessels came and went. [*Laughter.*] He sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman, because he must know what was the remedy for this case, but could not apply it. He was not even in the Cabinet. The voice of the right hon. Gentleman might be lifted up with eloquence, but he had no more power to make it felt by the Cabinet when he spoke for Ireland than he had himself, and not so much, for he could talk as often as the Speaker called upon him, but the right hon. Gentleman was obliged to hold his tongue according to orders. What was the remedy? They were not allowed to use their own money; they could not get Bills through the House though they appealed with "'bated breath and whispering humbleness" to this Minister and that Minister. When they asked for a small part of their own money to relieve their own people, they read in the papers comments on the audacity of attempts to get another pull at the pockets of John Bull. All they wanted was to be allowed to manage their own little affairs, and expend their own money on relieving distress when their own people when in dire distress through the blight upon their crops. But this was not allowed, and short of killing a Local Government Board Inspector he did not see what the people of Belmullet could do. [*Laughter.*] Something in that direction might call up a sudden blaze of attention to Belmullet. Why had Crete received so much attention by shells and otherwise? Simply because the Cretans rose up and killed somebody. [*Cries of* "Oh! oh!" and *laughter.*] It was his sore experience that one whiff of grapeshot had more eloquence than a thousand speakers like Demosthenes. There was a laugh from hon. Gentlemen opposite when allusions were made to Indian meal, and it might have been thought this was due to callousness or heartlessness, but he believed they were only indifferent from sheer ignorance. One hon. Gentleman cheered when the rise in the sale of Indian meal was mentioned, and perhaps thought it was good for British trade, but he forgot that these people had not the money to pay for it. These people had to pay their rent whether their potatoes were black or white. If there were a native Administration in Ireland—he would not say even a Parliament, but a local Board of Directors in sympathy with the people—they would not be setting their sums in proportion, or talking to them about logic, philosophy, or mathematics, but would find some means of bringing relief to the homes of these unfortunate people.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) said this district was one of the poorest in Ireland. The area was 120 square miles, and it was one vast mass of rain-sodden bog. The valuation of the 180,000 acres was only £10,818, or 1s. 2½d. an acre. There were 14,338 people in that area, and it was calculated that, out of this, 500 families, representing 1,500 individuals, were in a state bordering on starvation. He asserted that the Government had given the people of the district to understand that a railway connection would be made between Belmullet and the Westport Line to Achill at Mulranny Station. That promise had been made by the First Lord of the Treasury and his brother, the present Chief Secretary for Ireland. He wondered had the Chief Secretary received an expert report on the question of running this steamer to Achill. The depth of water at many places in Blacksod Bay was very little, and quite unable to enable a deep-draught steamer to run. Therefore, the Government proposed to run a flat-bottomed steamer, which would be a most dangerous experiment, for there was no part of Ireland subject to more severe storms than this place.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY claimed to move "That the question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 155; Noes, 37.—(Division List, No. 161.)

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Supply considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICE AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1897–8.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

QUARTER SESSIONS JURORS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

DR. TANNER asked for an explanation of its provisions.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry) said that, as the law stood, jurors at Quarter Sessions were frequently obliged to attend when there was really no business, and the result was that very great inconvenience was caused. This Bill relieved jurors of that attendance and provided proper machinery.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 30th April.

REGISTRATION OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 30th April.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 29th April.

SALE OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday next.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 3rd May.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 28th April.

TROUT FISHING CLOSE TIME (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

House adjourned at a Quarter after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 5th April 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

ALLOTMENTS (LONDON) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to facilitate the provision of allotments by the London County Council was presented by the Earl of Carrington; Read 1ª; and ordered to be printed. [No. 45.]

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

*Earl STANHOPE: I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether any facilities will be given to peers and peeresses and the officers of the House to witness Her Majesty's procession on June 22 next? I think it would be interesting to the House to have a reply to this question.

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount Cross): I am happy to be able to answer that facilities will be given to peers and peeresses to witness Her Majesty's procession on June 22 next. The Government are not able at present to give the exact details of the arrangements, but no doubt they will include facilities for the officers of the House.

The Earl of FEVERSHAM: I would ask the noble Viscount whether there will be any opportunity given for peers and peeresses to be present at the ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral? I believe that the practice hitherto has been that both Houses of Parliament have been represented on such occasions.

Viscount CROSS: I have not had notice of this question and I cannot say positively; but I believe I may state, from what I have learnt, that the space in the west front of St. Paul's is so small that accommodation for peers and peeresses could not be granted.

PREFERENTIAL PAYMENTS IN BANKRUPTCY ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL.

*Viscount KNUTSFORD, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said the object of the Bill was to secure further protection for the wages of clerks and workmen in case of the winding up of companies. The Bill had come from the House of Commons, where it was strongly supported by Members on both sides, and especially by those who had taken a special interest in questions affecting the working classes. There was no opposition to the Bill in the other House; the only point urged against it by Members, who entirely supported the Bill as it stood, was that it did not go far enough. The Bill was in strict accord with and gave further extension to the policy which had been confirmed by Parliament on several occasions of protecting workmen's wages by giving them priority in case of the bankruptcy, liquidation, and winding up of companies. He need not do more than refer to the comparatively recent Acts of 1883 and 1886, which gave effect to this policy of protection by giving priority to wages of workmen and labourers in certain cases, and he would come at once to the Act of 1888, of which the present Bill was an extension. By that Act certain debts were given priority, and amongst them were the wages or salaries of clerks or workmen not exceeding £50, due for services rendered during four months prior to the receiving order or the winding up of the company; and, further, the wages of workmen or labourers, not exceeding £25, due for services rendered during two months before the same dates. That Act had worked well, but experience had shown that it did not go far enough, and further protection was needed. It did not cover the case of a company being wound up, and the assets not being sufficient, or not more than sufficient, to cover the claims of debenture holders. In these days of limited companies and floating debentures, it had been found that the workmen frequently lost their wages. Cases of considerable hardship were cited by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Ascroft), who, with other Members from Lancashire, had paid great attention to the question, in which much interest was taken by the textile operatives of Lancashire, and by whom, indeed, this movement for extension may be said to have

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

started. The Bill met the practical grievance he had referred to, and gave the wages of clerks and workmen priority over debenture holders. Section 2 of the Bill provided for this in cases of the winding up of companies, and Section 3 for cases in which a receiver had been appointed. By Section 2 of the Bill it is provided that the debts mentioned in the Act of 1888, that is, the salaries and wages which he had before referred to, shall have priority over the claims of the holders of debentures or debenture stock, under any floating charge on the assets or effects or uncalled capital of the company which is being wound up. The Bill was certainly a most just one, because the work in respect of which wages had been earned had improved and enhanced the value of the very assets and property to which the debenture holders would look in the case of the company being wound up, and the work would have been done just as much in the interest of the debenture holders as in the interest of the shareholders. The Solicitor General (Sir R. Finlay) during the discussion of the Bill in the House of Commons said he thought that in every part of the House there was

> "a general agreement as to the fairness of the principle on which the Bill was founded. The debenture holders had a charge upon the undertakings, and it certainly was very difficult to say why, consistently with any principle of equity, they should not be compelled, on the principle of the Act of 1888, to give a certain priority to those workmen by whose exertions their security had been provided. So far there was, he submitted, no disagreement, and he believed he expressed the views of the Government in saying that."

It was quite clear that this extension of protection of clerks' and workmen's wages would hardly appreciably diminish the security of debenture holders. If there were any slight diminution, they might fairly set against it the justice of the case, the principle admitted and recognised by the Act of 1888; and the importance to workmen that they should not lose their wages. As he said before, there were some who heartily approved of the Bill, but only regretted that it did not go far enough, and that it did not give priority over specific charges created by mortgages. The Bill is confined to debentures which merely create a floating charge on the assets or effects or uncalled capital, in which case, as pointed out by the Solicitor General, the company is at liberty to dispose of its property, and the charge is applicable only in respect of such property as is there when the debenture holders step in to take possession. The Bill does not include and give priority over instruments which create a specific mortgage of part of the company's property, as, for example, the land and buildings which belonged to the company. An amendment was proposed in the other House to effect this further extension, but it was pointed out that these latter instruments were on a different footing to those which merely created a floating charge, and that there might arise considerable difficulties in giving effect to this additional extension. The Amendment was withdrawn, and the Bill was left as it was. He hoped he had satisfied their Lordships that this was essentially a just Bill, and that workmen had a right to look for protection against debenture holders, seeing that the work they had done was as much done in the interests of debenture holders as of shareholders.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD HALSBURY), on the part of the Government, said the Bill had their approval, but he need not add anything to what had been said on the subject.

Read 2^a (according to Order); and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said: This is a Bill authorising Her Majesty's Government to raise £5,458,000 for the purpose of defraying the expenses of certain important military services. The Bill has been for some time before the public, and has been fully discussed, and there is no occasion for detaining this House with a lengthened explanation of its provisions. Two questions, I think, arise with regard to it—first, whether the services provided for are in themselves necessary for the safety of the Empire and the efficiency of the Army; and, secondly, whether it is proper to provide for them by means of a loan rather than from the annual Estimates. As for the former question, your Lordships will find a short summary of the proposed works in the schedule of the Bill; and fuller information with regard to that part of it which has reference to barracks was laid before Parliament early in the Session. The works fall under three distinct heads. The first group comprises what are spoken of as defence works; the second includes barracks and the completion of our larger camps; and the third group, which is a composite one, provides for rifle ranges, for the acquisition of ground for manœuvring, and for certain services connected with the mobilisation of the Army in time of war. The defence works, in which the Navy is largely, indeed primarily, interested, are estimated to cost the sum of £1,120,000. The whole of this expenditure will be incurred at our ports and harbours in the United Kingdom, and at different points throughout the Empire. There are, in the first place, our military ports and naval bases—ports of which Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Cork may be taken as representative. Then there are our defended mercantile harbours, such, for example, as the Mersey and the Clyde, or Dublin and Belfast. Besides these, we propose to complete the defences of four great strategic harbours at Falmouth, Lough Swilly, Berehaven, and the Scilly Islands. Work at these places was commenced six or seven years ago in consequence of strong representations from the Admiralty as to the importance of making use of them for the purpose of facilitating the passing of trade and commerce into the country in time of war. Considering the volume of the trade which converges in the neighbourhood of these islands, there can, I suppose, be no two opinions as to the importance of these harbours from this point of view. They will, moreover, be of great service to our ships of war, which they will, if necessary, support, and for which they will provide convenient coaling stations. In the words of the Joint Naval and Military Committee:—

> "These harbours would not only afford a very considerable safeguard to our commerce, but would enable Her Majesty's fleet and ships to act with greater freedom and activity, confident in the existence of a coal supply at the very points where it would be wanted by vessels covering our trade and acting against hostile squadrons in the Atlantic."

Besides these ports and harbours in and around the United Kingdom, there are certain fortresses and coaling stations abroad, at which additional works, considered necessary both by the Naval and Military authorities, are to be undertaken or completed. Amongst the fortresses I may mention Gibraltar and Malta; amongst the coaling stations such places as the Cape of Good Hope, Hong Kong, and the Straits Settlements. A minute description of the works to be undertaken at all these points would be highly technical and very tedious to the House, and, more than that, it would be impossible in many cases, without detriment to Imperial interests, to make any public announcement as to the precise steps which were in contemplation. ["Hear, hear!"] I may, however, speaking in general terms, say that the whole, or nearly the whole, of the work which it is proposed to undertake at the coaling stations has become necessary for the purpose of securing them against attacks from cruisers or torpedo-boats. I need not say that there is nothing in proposals of the kind to indicate any relaxation of our determination to maintain the supremacy of this country as a maritime Power, or any intention of ceasing to look to the Navy as primarily responsible for securing the safety of our possessions. But I have not found anyone who is prepared to contend that naval supremacy, however decided, relieves us of the necessity of taking precautions against the kind of attacks to which all these outworks of the Empire might be exposed during the temporary absence of our fleets, and it is in a great measure for the purpose of securing the freedom and mobility of these fleets that we desire to make our coaling stations and naval bases as secure as possible against the risk to which they might be exposed in certain events. ["Hear, hear!"] I must explain that for this purpose we do not rely upon what is commonly spoken of as heavy armament, but upon armament which is described as medium, more especially upon those quick-firing guns in which so marked an improvement has taken place of late, and which appear to be destined to play so conspicuous a part in the warfare of the future. I may also explain that the expenditure which will be covered by this loan is to provide, not the guns themselves, but the permanent works and emplacements for their reception. We do not in this loan borrow a shilling for the purpose of providing the guns themselves. There is so much uncertainty as to the lifetime of a gun—changes are so frequent in the type of our artillery—the weapon which represents at one moment the acme of perfection becomes so suddenly and so rapidly obsolete that we do not consider that we should be justified in borrowing money for the purpose of procuring artillery of any kind. ["Hear, hear!"] On former occasions money has been taken for this purpose in loans, but we have thought it undesirable to do so. The only other remark which I will make upon this part of the subject is, that I have not attempted to give more than a general idea of the nature of the works which it is proposed to execute. They will, of course, vary according to the local conditions of the different places which it is desired to defend. For barracks we have provided the sum of £2,989,000, and there is no part of the proposed expenditure which I regard with more unqualified approval than this. There are so many changes, I was on the point of saying of fashion, in the matter of guns and forts, and even in the theory of defence, that a civilian may be excused if he naturally regards with some misgiving the expenditure of large sums of money upon such objects, but we cannot look forward to a time when this country will be without an Army, and there will, I suppose, never be a time when we shall be indifferent to the housing of our soldiers comfortably and decently. ["Hear, hear!"] Much has been done during the last few years in this direction, but much has also, I feel, been left undone. The Act of 1890 provided for the expenditure of £4,100,000, the whole of which has been virtually exhausted, but the programme covered by that Act, was admittedly an incomplete programme. It was, in fact, the case that the original scheme of barrack construction put forward in 1890 was a scheme which would have cost £9,000,000 to complete, and it was thought better, and I have no doubt for sufficient reasons, to undertake a part only of the task at once. We provide, under our Bill, for an expenditure of £893,000 on barracks at our home stations, and for an expenditure of £1,311,00 for barracks at our fortresses and coaling stations abroad, while £135,000 goes to the improvement of the married soldiers' quarters, a service most necessary in the interests of the Army, and one which I hope may prove to be in the end not uneconomical, as it will, to some extent, reduce the cost at present incurred in providing our married soldiers with lodgings. Besides this there is the sum of £650,000 for the completion of large camps. This will be mainly incurred in replacing by permanent buildings the wooden huts at present in use by the troops, and in getting rid of various makeshift or worn-out structures entirely unfit for their present use. At some of our camps the soldiers are still occupying huts built originally to last only 20 years, but which have already been made to last more than double that time. I own that nothing could, it appears to me, be more creditable to our Army administration than the gradual substitution of sound and sanitary buildings, whether it be for these miserable huts or for some of the older barracks, which have for many years been in a deplorable sanitary condition, and from some of which disease, distinctly attributable to unhealthy surroundings, has been scarcely ever absent. ["Hear, hear!"] The remaining section of the loan provides a substantial sum for the acquisition of rifle ranges, upon the necessity of which Earl Spencer lately spoke with so much force. These will be primarily intended for the use of the Regular forces, but we shall endeavour to construct them at points where they will be also available for the Auxiliary forces, and, where, if possible, camping grounds can be attached to them. I might, perhaps, take this opportunity of saying a word of explanation on a point which I am afraid I did not explain quite clearly when I replied to the noble Earl the other day. I stated in my answer to him that some of the Volunteer ranges were not inspected, and the noble Earl seemed rather surprised at that statement. I have been at pains since to ascertain what the facts are, and I will state them to the House. All new ranges must, according to our rules (which are of long standing), be inspected to the satisfaction of the War Office before being taken into use, and there is no reason to suppose that this rule has been departed from, though it is impossible to be certain that it has been adhered to in the case of some of the old standing local Volunteer ranges. It is in regard to the periodical inspection of ranges in use that the practice has differed. Ranges in constant use by Regulars are, of course, under proper and continual supervision. But in the case of local Volunteer ranges no periodical inspection has hitherto been required; and it is probable that some ranges, which were passed safe when first created, have since, owing to new buildings, etc., become unsafe. The overhauling of all ranges by the General Officers Commanding, now in process, is designed to bring to light and to remedy any such cases. The expedient of reduced charges has been resorted to in the case of certain ranges, which have been reported as unsafe for the full charge, and which cannot without undue expense be made safe for the full charge. This expedient is regarded as a temporary makeshift, preferable to closing altogether a range in a district where no other firing accommodation is for the moment available. It is hoped gradually to provide firing accommodation with the full charge for all Volunteers; but it is impossible to determine how large and difficult a matter this will be till full reports are received form all General Officers Commanding. Then under this division of the loan we propose to acquire a tract including in round figures some 60 square miles, on Salisbury Plain, for use as a manœuvring ground. The necessity of providing an area of this sort has been pressed upon us most urgently by the military authorities, particularly by those who are responsible for the efficiency of our Cavalry. We have been continually urged during recent years to add to the extent already in our possession at Aldershot, but the House is aware that that part of this country has become every year more popular for residential purposes, with the result that an acre of land which a few years ago could be purchased for from £10 to £20, now costs £50 or £60, and is not always to be got even at that price. We consider ourselves fortunate in having secured, on what we believe to be very favourable terms, this large tract of country in a part of England which, from its configuration and the character of its surface, is particularly suitable for manœuvring purposes. I should, however, perhaps explain that its acquisition does not in our opinion in any way relieve us from the necessity of obtaining powers by legislation to hold manœuvres on a larger scale than any which could be carried out either at Aldershot or on Salisbury Plain. It is essential to manœuvres of this kind that they should take place over an area considerably more extended that anything we should be likely to acquire at Salisbury Plain, and upon ground with which the troops are not familiar, a condition which is certainly not complied with by Aldershot, and which a few years hence will not be complied with by Salisbury Plain. It is in this section of the loan that we have provided a small sum for what was described not very accurately or felicitously as the fortification of London. The suspicion with which this proposal was first regarded has, I am glad to say, almost completely disappeared. The smallness of the sum taken ought, I think, of itself to be sufficient to show that we are not meditating the circumvallation of London or the erection of a number of huge and expensive fortresses in its vicinity. The Duke of Devonshire, in a speech delivered in this House, stated with great clearness the principles by which we have been determined in providing for the defence of the colonial fortresses and naval bases outworks of the Empire. The same principles, *mutatis mutandis,* apply to the home defence. You may be never so convinced of the necessity of maintaining our supremacy at sea; you may be thoroughly convinced that you are, as a matter of fact, supreme at sea; but public opinion, which in this case seems to me to be another expression for the common sense of the country, will not allow you to effect all your insurances in one office, or to disregard the precautions necessary for the land defence of these islands. Our Army is, in point of fact, organised with reference to its mobilisation for home defence, a precaution which would be entirely uncalled for if it were true that our naval superiority was the only matter with which we need concern ourselves. In our mobilisation schemes a place has been given to our Volunteer force, and we desire that if they are to fight they should fight under the most advantageous conditions. With this object in view we propose in the event of mobilisation to resist invasion, that they should be employed at certain strategical points, which are clearly indicated for us by the configuration of the country, and at those points we have purchased sites on which in an emergency light earthworks might be rapidly thrown up. At certain of the more important of these positions it is considered desirable to select a central spot where tools and equipments and reserve ammunition shall be stored in buildings of suitable strength. These works form an essential feature in the decentralisation of our military stores so indispensable to rapid mobilisation. The idea is not a new one, for the policy was first accepted by Mr. Stanhope in 1889, and it was accepted and given effect to by a succession of high military authorities ever since. It remains for me to say one word as to the propriety of defraying the cost of these services by means of a loan. Precedent is in our favour, for during the last 30 years there have been a series of such loans. Principle is in our favour, for it seems obviously just that the cost of works which will be durable, and which will add to the security of this country for many years to come, should not fall entirely upon the five years during which the works will be in progress. But, besides that, there can be no doubt that a large programme of this sort can be far better carried out under loan than from moneys which Parliament may vote from time to time. Steady, regular progress with large constructions of this kind is most desirable, and such progress is much more likely to be made when those who are responsible for the execution of the work know for certain that the necessary funds will be at their disposal, and that they will not be at the mercy of a chance vote or of the delays and uncertainties which may be occasioned owing to the condition of public business in another place. Finally, in defence of borrowing, I think it is fair to say that Parliament and the people of this country have a much better opportunity of considering a scheme of national defence as a whole when it is embodied as this scheme is in a single Measure than when it is presented to them in a series of fragmentary proposals spread over a number of years. I do not know that it is necessary for me to go more fully into the contents of the Bill; but if any of your Lordships desire any further information on any point I shall be glad to give it. I move that the Bill be now Read a Second time.

EARL SPENCER said he did not rise to criticise the policy the noble Marquess had enunciated. He was, when in office, responsible for some large works for the Navy which were to be carried out on the same principle, and it was, therefore, not for him to question the policy of carrying out large military works which were to be of service for a lengthened time by means of loan. He was glad to find it was not proposed to deal with the armaments by means of loan. Some years ago our guns were provided under a loan, an entirely faulty principle, for as the noble Marquess had pointed out, guns had not long lives, and they were often and rapidly changed in character, and should not therefore be put on the same footing as permanent works. The noble Marquess had referred to the policy of these works with reference to the Navy, but it was not necessary to enlarge upon this subject. On a recent occasion the Duke of Devonshire set forth in the clearest way the principle on which this country was to regard the Army and the Navy, and a debt of gratitude was due to him for his clear exposition of a policy for a considerable number of years adopted by both parties at the Admiralty and at the War Office. The noble Marquess had referred to this again, and he cordially agreed with his statement in regard to the Navy. It was a necessity that this country should be supreme at sea, and one of the conditions of this supremacy was that the Navy should not be hampered by having to take care of and to protect certain naval bases and coaling stations. He therefore heartily approved and indorsed the views of the noble Marquess as to the importance of making sufficiently strong to resist cruisers not only certain ports in Great Britain and Ireland, but ports in our colonies and in other parts of the world. Berehaven, Falmouth, and the Scilly Islands had been alluded to, and at the two first-mentioned it was of the greatest possible importance to have strong defences, for they were important bases for the Navy in case of war and as coaling stations. He was glad to hear the reference to Hong Kong, undoubtedly one of the most important posts abroad for our Navy. He had an opportunity of visiting that port last year, and was surprised at the magnificence of the harbour, and greatly impressed with the importance of the place to British interests in the East, and for Her Majesty's Fleet in that part of the world. He took some pains to go into the matter, and though perhaps it would not be right or desirable to enter upon it now, and state publicly what was required, he felt strongly the great necessity for improving some of the defensive works at that place. He was glad to hear of the intention to improve the accommodation for troops in some of the great camps of the country. In former years, when in Ireland, he often visited the Curragh, and well he knew—though perhaps something had since been done to improve the barracks there—how deplorable was the accommodation for troops. With regard to rifle ranges, it was not necessary for him to say much, having recently addressed their Lordships on the subject. His impression was that all ranges of Volunteer rifle corps had been inspected in the first instance, but they had not been periodically inspected subsequently; therefore, as the range of the arms in the hands of Volunteers increased, difficulties arose as to the safety of these ranges, and these difficulties would, with periodical inspection, have been made known before. He attached the greatest importance for the maintenance of the Volunteer force to ranges being available as close as possible to their headquarters. He trusted the opportunity given by the loans under this Bill to establish ranges might be used by Volunteers, so as effectually to provide adequate and suitable ranges, which were necessary for their efficiency and their very existence. He thought their Lordships would be glad to have heard again from the noble Marquess that there was no intention, as some people thought, on the part of the Government to erect fortifications all round London. The majority of people would say that that would be a very unnecessary and a very wasteful expenditure of money, but few would deny that the proposal which the noble Marquess now made—the continuation of those centres of defence and arms for Volunteers and others—would be very desirable and beneficial for the country. He had thought it well to express the views of those who sat with him on that Bench and of himself on this subject. They did not, of course, intend in any way to criticise or to impede the progress of the Measure, which no doubt their Lordships would readily accept and pass. [*Cheers.*]

Read 2ª (according to Order). Committee negatived; and Bill to be Read 3ª To-morrow.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

MILITARY LANDS ACTS (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be Read 3ª To-morrow.

House Adjourned at Twenty Minutes past Five o'Clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Ten o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 5th April 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY BILL.

As amended, considered.

Clause 49,—

PENSION FUND.

(1) The Directors of the Company may, if they think fit, establish a Fund (in this Section referred to as the Fund) for the payment of pensions and retiring allowances or gratuities to old or disabled servants of the Company not entitled to be members of the Superannuation Fund established by the Company in

pursuance of the powers conferred on them by "The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (New Works and Additional Powers) Act 1871," and for the purposes of the Fund five persons—the Chairman, the General Manager, the Secretary, the Chief Engineer, and the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Company—shall be a committee for the purpose of preparing, and shall prepare, a scheme (in this Act referred to as the scheme) for the establishment of the Fund for the payment of pensions or retiring allowances or gratuities to the servants of the Company, being contributors to the Fund, or to the widows and children of such contributors, such contributors not being salaried officers of the Company or otherwise entitled to become members of the Superannuation Fund, and such committee may, by a majority of its members, determine in and by such scheme the following matters and things (that is to say):—

(*a*) What class of servants of the Company, subject as aforesaid, shall be entitled to contribute to and participate in the benefits of the Fund, and what length of service shall entitle them so to participate;

(*b*) What (if anything) shall disqualify any servant of the Company from becoming a contributor to the Fund and participating in the benefits thereof;

(*c*) Under what circumstances and conditions, and to what extent, in what period and to what age, persons becoming members of the Fund shall be allowed to make back payments so as to entitle them to pensions or retiring allowance or gratuity;

(*d*) Under what circumstances any person having been a contributor to the Fund shall cease to be entitled to participate in the benefits thereof;

(*e*) What proportion (if any) of his contribution to the Fund any person having been but ceasing to be a contributor thereto shall be entitled to receive;

(*f*) What proportion (if any) of the sums contributed by any person or by the Company to the Fund shall be payable to his representatives in the event of his dying before he becomes entitled to a pension or to a retiring allowance or gratuity;

(*g*) The age at which, or other circumstances under which, any person shall become entitled to a pension or to a retiring allowance or gratuity;

(*h*) The scale upon which pensions or allowances shall be calculated, and under what (if any) circumstances such scale may from time to time be revised;

(*i*) The amount of payment, either weekly, fortnightly, or monthly which all servants of the Company becoming members of the Fund shall contribute to the Fund;

(*j*) The future management and direction of the Fund, and the number, qualification and mode of appointment or election of a committee, in this Act called "the Managing Committee," in whom such management and direction shall be vested, and the remuneration of the members and officers of the managing committee;

(*k*) The mode in which the persons by whom and the times at which the accounts of the managing committee, or of their secretary or other officer shall be audited, and the manner in which contributors to the Fund and others shall have access to the accounts;

(*l*) The securities on which the moneys received on account of the Fund shall be from time to time invested;

(*m*) And generally all such other matters and things in relation to the Fund as the Committee appointed by this Act shall deem fit and proper to form part of and to be included in such scheme;

(*n*) The persons to be benefited by the Fund may be divided into two or more classes, according to the amount of payment, or according to such other conditions as the managing committee shall determine, power being reserved by the scheme to remove any contributor from one class to another, provided that no such removal shall place the contributor in a worse position in respect to his past contributions than he would have occupied if the removal had not been made;

(*o*) The managing committee may from time to time, with the consent of the Directors of the Company, modify the rules and regulations of the Fund and the conditions upon which persons may, after such modification, contribute thereto;

(*p*) The scheme shall set forth under what circumstances provision shall be made for the dissolution or discontinuance in whole or in part of the Fund, and in any such case what provision shall be made for outstanding or accruing annuities and liabilities, and for the distribution of the assets belonging to the Fund, and what consents, on the part of the Company or of the contributors to the Fund, shall be required;

(*q*) The scheme shall provide for the holding of meetings of the members of the Fund, or meetings of delegates representing the members of the Fund, in districts set forth in the scheme, or for otherwise bringing the accounts and position of the Fund to the knowledge of its members;

(*r*) The scheme shall be submitted for the approval of the Board of Trade, and that Board may consider the same, and may either approve the same without alteration, or may suggest any alterations therein, or may disapprove the same; and if the Committee assent to the alterations (if any) so suggested, the Board of Trade may approve the scheme as altered, and the Fund shall be established in accordance with the scheme approved by that Board;

(*s*) The Company shall, in the month of March in every year, send to the Board of Trade an account showing the then condition of the Fund, and if that Board are not satisfied that the Fund is sufficient, and in their judgment consider that it should be discontinued, they may order it to be discontinued, and the assets to be distributed in accordance with the scheme of this Act, subject to such modifications (if any) as they may consider necessary in the circumstances of the case.

(2) The Company shall, at the end of each and every half-year after the establishment of the Fund, contribute thereto, out of the revenues of the Company, such sums of money as shall from time to time be authorised by three-fourths of the votes of their shareholders present in person or by proxy at a general meeting of the Company, duly convened with express notice of the special object, and which half-yearly sum may from time to time be altered to such extent as the Company in like manner authorise or determine. No contribution of the Company to the Fund shall affect or take away the right or power of the Company to grant out of their own proper funds pension allowances and allowances during sickness, or other allowances, to any of their officers or servants as they think proper; but the Company may, by resolution of their Directors, make provision for the payment out of their revenues, or out of moneys received on revenue account, of any sum or sums of money for the relief or benefit of any servants of the Company who are, from age or other circumstances, unable to become members of the Fund.

(3) The managing committee may, from time to time, regulate their own procedure, and may appoint such officers and at such salaries, payable out of the Fund, as they may think fit, unless the Directors of the Company otherwise provide for such salaries and the expenses of managing the Fund.

(4) The following provisions shall extend and apply to the Fund and the scheme, which may be established and from time to time altered under the powers of this Act, shall not be inconsistent with the stipulations contained in this Section (that is to say):—

(*a*) It shall not be compulsory upon any servant of the Company to become a member of the Fund;

(*b*) A meeting of the members of the Fund, or of the delegates as the case may be, shall be held within twelve months after the establishment of the scheme, and thenceforth once in every succeeding year. At such first and succeeding annual meetings one of the auditors shall be appointed on behalf of the members of the Fund to remain in office for a period of two years;

(*c*) A copy of the rules shall be delivered by the secretary to every member of the Fund on demand;

(*d*) The managing committee shall allow any member of or person having an interest in the Fund to inspect the books at all reasonable hours at the principal office of the Company, or at any place where the same are kept, except that no such member or person, unless he be an officer of the Company or be specially authorised by a resolution of the managing committee to do so, shall have the right to inspect the account of any other member without the written consent of such member;

(*e*) The Company shall supply, gratuitously, every member or person interested with a balance sheet, or other document duly audited, containing the particulars as to the receipts and expenditure and effects of the Fund;

(*f*) The Company shall keep a copy of the last annual balance sheet for the time being, and of the last septennial or quinquennial valuation for the time being, hereinafter required to be made, together with the report of the auditors (if any), always hung up in a conspicuous place at the principal offices of the Company, or place where the accounts of the Fund are kept, unless the managing committee shall have supplied each member of the Fund with a copy of such document.

(5) Two consulting actuaries may be appointed by the managing committee after the expiration of the first seven years from the establishment of the Fund, and thenceforth at the expiration of every five years thereafter, to examine and report on the state of the Fund and of its assets and liabilities, and one of such actuaries shall be appointed by the Directors of the Company and the other by the members of the Fund or their delegates in meeting assembled, and the actuaries, if they shall consider any alteration to be necessary, shall recommend the scheme which in their judgment, is proper, to be adopted with reference thereto, such scheme being as nearly as may be in conformity with the scheme to be established under the provisions of this Act, and they shall show the proposed addition to or diminution of the benefits, as the case may be, as nearly as possible, rateably and without preference or priority, amongst the persons entitled thereto. Any differences of opinion between the consulting actuaries shall be determined by a third actuary of their selection, or in such other way as they think fit.

(6) If such two consulting actuaries shall, on the first or any subsequent investigation as hereinbefore provided, report that the Fund is insufficient, and that in their judgment it should be discontinued and the assets distributed, or that it should be continued only in the event of increased contributions being made by the Company and the members of the Fund, they shall prescribe the amount of such contributions respectively, and if the Company on their part shall fail, within six months after receiving such report, to make such further contribution or provision as may ensure the adequacy of the Fund, or if the members of the Fund or their delegates in meeting assembled (which meeting the managing committee shall convene) shall, within the like period of six months, fail to agree to the additional contributions to be made by the members of the Fund, the Fund shall be discontinued, and its assets distributed in accordance with the scheme made under the provisions of this Act, subject to such modifications as the actuaries may consider necessary in the circumstances of the case.

(7) Section 53 (Company may contribute towards funds of Provident Society) of the Act of 1885 is hereby repealed.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) moved to add at the end of the clause the following sub-section:—

(8) Sections 27 and 76 of the Friendly Societies Act 1896, and so much of Section 28

of the same Act, as relates to the sending reports and abstracts of valuations to the registrar shall apply to the Fund as if it were a registered Friendly Society.

The right hon. Gentleman said that the Question before the House was in a nutshell. The Report of the Committee that considered the Bill stated that the Bill as deposited contained a provision for making contributions to the pension fund obligatory on the part of the Company's servants; but that that provision was struck out of the Bill as laid before the Committee. That was perfectly true; but it was struck out before the Bill went to the Committee, and, therefore, they had nothing to thank the Committee for in regard to that matter. The Committee's Report also stated that the Report of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies on the subject of the pension fund was laid before the Committee. But while these words might seem to imply that the Committee had done something in the sense suggested by the Registrar General, the fact was exactly the opposite. The House would remember that before the Bill went to the Committee he moved an Instruction which was, after a very excellent Debate, defeated in a full House by only a small majority. On that occasion he contended that these funds ought to be closely and carefully watched by the House. He was not again going into the general expediency of the fund, for it had been decided so far as this Bill was concerned; and what the House had to consider was whether the Report of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies had been in any sense complied with or whether any weight was attached to it by the Committee. The Committee had considered it and had given it the go-by. The Motion he had just made would apply to the fund created by the Bill some portion of the general law. Other funds of a similar nature, established by any body not a railway company, had to be the subject of report to the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, and were under all kinds of statutory provisions, contained in the Friendly Societies Act of 1896. The Committee had altogether rejected these conditions in this case, and had given no reason whatever for rejecting the recommendation that the fund should be put in relation to the Registrar of Friendly Societies, although that was what the House probably expected them to do, and what they should have done. What he now proposed was a compromise. He asked that three clauses of the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, should in part apply to this fund, namely, Section 27, requiring annual returns; Section 28 requiring valuation to be sent to the Registrar; and Section 76, empowering the Registrar to inspect the affairs of the society when he was applied to by the members of that society. It might be said that the finances of these great railway companies were so sound that they need never be brought before the Registrar of Friendly Societies at all, but there was one of these societies which had a deficiency of something like £300,000 in its accounts, and while, no doubt, that would be made up, he thought it would be much better that the general law as to friendly societies should apply to all those bodies, so far as their accounts were concerned. ["Hear, hear!"] Sections 27 and 28 of the Act were really only statistical, and the application of the latter section was made only partial in order to avoid conflict with a sub-section in the Bill, which provided that the first valuation should be at the end of seven years, instead of at the end of five years, as required by the general law. Of course, if the promoters would rather have Section 28 in its entirety, he would be very glad to agree, for that would still more meet his views. Section 76 had been found in the case of all other societies an excellent provision for the protection of the interests of the members, and he thought it would be a wise provision in this case. The Committee had put in the Board of Trade; but why that Board should be selected as being a better authority than an office which existed for the express purpose, he could not imagine. The Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies was created by Parliament to look after bodies of this kind, and he and his officers were skilled on this question. Members would see that Section 49, the first start of the society, was left in the absolute hands of the Company itself. The Committee might tell the House that the Board of Trade was to be called in, and had to be satisfied. But he personally would prefer that this fund should be managed in accordance with the general law which Parliament had sanctioned, believing that there was no authority equal to that which was provided by the existence of the Registrar of Friendly Societies. They might be told that the Board of Trade could, if they liked, and probably would, call in the services of the Chief Registrar, and ask him to advise; but was it not much better that they should go to him direct? He begged to move the Amendment which stood upon the Paper in his name.

Mr. W. J. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) on behalf of the promoters, said he must not be understood to accept either in detail or in full, any of the statements of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the functions of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies; or still less as to what was the intention of Parliament in framing the law which now regulated friendly societies as to the arrangements which very often existed between private employers and their workmen. The Amendment seemed to him to be entirely covered by paragraph (*s*) of Sub-section (1) of the clause; and though it would involve a certain amount of extra trouble to the Company, it did not seem to him to effect any great benefit to the men or to anybody else; but, on behalf of the promoters, he was quite ready to accept it. It was only fair to say that the Company received private information from the Board of Trade that very probably, when the Bill came before the House of Lords, they would refuse to accept the powers which had been placed upon them by the Commons' Committee. Of course, in that case the Bill would come back amended from that House.

Amendment agreed to.

Bill to be Read the Third time.

QUESTIONS.

ENGINEER VOLUNTEERS (SMALL ARM AMMUNITION).

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he is aware that the allowance of ball and blank ammunition to Engineer Volunteers has been greatly reduced, and whether the musketry requirements for efficiency have been reduced in like proportion; and whether, having regard to the great pains taken by the Sheffield Engineers and other corps to attain skill in shooting, and the encouragement given to musketry throughout the West Riding by the prizes generously offered by Colonel Bingham, Sheffield Engineers, facilities can be afforded to his regiment and others affected by the new order to obtain ammunition at the lowest possible cost?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): Yes, Sir. The allowance of small arm ammunition for Engineer Volunteers has recently been reduced to the amount considered adequate by the military authorities. The musketry requirements for efficiency of Engineer Volunteers are so moderate that they are not susceptible of reduction. Volunteers will continue to be allowed to purchase ammunition at the lowest possible cost.

TROOPS QUARTERED AT CANTERBURY.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, in the cavalry reorganisation scheme, what troops will be quartered in Canterbury; and what amount will be allowed for building barracks, stabling, etc., for horses and men stationed there?

Mr. BRODRICK: The actual troops to be quartered at Canterbury must depend to some extent on the buildings available, as to which an estimate is now being made. Some cost will be involved in the necessary new buildings, but I cannot at present state the precise figure to be expended.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War the number of men discharged, at their own request, from Chelsea Royal Hospital in each year from 1890 to the present time?

Mr. BRODRICK: In the seven years ending 1896 the numbers of pensioners discharged from Chelsea Hospital at their own request were respectively 9, 17, 13, 13, 12, 24, 18, giving a yearly average of 15. The total number of in-pensioners is 547.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office how many contractors are employed to provide the meat for the pensioners at Royal Chelsea Hospital; and if the contract specially provides for the supply of English meat?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): One contractor supplies the Royal Hospital at Chelsea, but the Infirmary contract is sometimes given to a separate firm. The meat is of the best description, and of English origin—as far as it is possible to be certain on the point.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD asked whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that there were two contractors engaged in the supply of the meat to the hospital, the one being the person with whom the contract was entered into by the Government, and the other being a sub-contractor who actually supplied the meat?

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that he was not aware of the fact. As far as he knew there was only one contractor engaged.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD asked whether the hon. Gentleman would make inquiries into the matter?

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that if the hon. and gallant Gentleman would furnish him with the particulars of the case, he would inquire into them.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) asked who were responsible for seeing that the meat supplied was of good quality?

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he believed that the senior officer at the hospital was responsible.

OUT-DOOR RELIEF (WESTPORT AND CASTLEBAR UNIONS).

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of persons on out-door relief in each electoral division of the Westport and Castlebar Unions for the month of February 1896, and the corresponding numbers for the same month in 1897?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds Central): The number of persons on outdoor relief in the Westport Union during the month of February 1896 was 608, as compared with 1,320 during February last. In the Castlebar Union the numbers in the same periods were 271 and 335. I have forwarded to the hon. Member a list detailing the numbers by Electoral Divisions.

GAMBLING IN OPTIONS AND FUTURES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (Mr. W. FIELD), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Government will consider the necessity of introducing a Measure similar to the sections of the Canada Criminal Code, which came into operation in March 1893, prohibiting gambling in prices?

MR. HANBURY (for Mr. RITCHIE): As I have already informed the hon. Member, I do not propose to introduce legislation on the subject referred to.

ARMY RECRUITING.

COLONEL WYNDHAM MURRAY (Bath): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been dawn to the fact, as shown in the Annual Report of Recruiting, that although the number of men under two years' service in the Army was less last year than in any of the previous four years, yet the number of men under that length of service who were discharged as invalids was greater than in any of those years; and whether he can explain the reason for this increase of invalid recruits; and, with reference to the same Report, whether he can state the reason why the numbers of Militiamen who joined the Regular forces have constantly diminished during the last five years; and whether the question of the reduction of the bounty given on completion of preliminary drill has been considered in connection with this decrease?

*MR. BRODRICK: There is a small increase in the invaliding of men under two years' service. It is probably attributable to the increased attention paid to physical training, by which men who are unable to bear the strain are more rapidly and surely found out. The diminution in the numbers of Militiamen who have joined the Regular Forces may to some little extent be due to the reduction in the rate of bounty payable on completing their drill on enlistment. If it should continue to increase, the question will be considered.

AUXILIARY SORTING CLERKS (LIMERICK).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that there is at present a considerable number of Auxiliary Sorting Clerks in the Limerick Post Office who have been in the employment of the Department for a period extending over six years, but who have received very small remuneration; and whether the Department will, in view of the fact that the duties performed by the officials mentioned are essentially necessary to the efficient working of the Limerick Sorting Branch, place those deserving auxiliaries on the established list?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): It is the case that Auxiliary Sorting Clerks, eight in number, have been employed for some years at the Limerick Post Office at the reduced pay ordinarily given to unestablished officers not giving a full day's attendance. A proposal is now before the Treasury for making an addition to the permanent staff of sorting clerks at Limerick, and should the necessary authority be received, the opportunity will be taken of placing as many as possible of these Auxiliary Sorting Clerks on the Establishment.

LAND COMMISSION.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is now the practice of the Chief Land Commission to hear all fair rent appeal cases from the barony of Duhallow, County Cork, at the sittings in Killarney; and, in view of the greater convenience to landlords, tenants, and professional men, will the Commission arrange to have the appeals heard in the city of Cork?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The barony mentioned in the Question comprises the Poor Law Unions of Mill Street, Kanturk, and Mallow. As a rule, all cases from Mill Street and Kanturk Unions are heard at Killarney, as being the most convenient place for all parties concerned, while cases from Mallow are heard, as a rule, at Cork. In listing cases for hearing, due regard is always had to the convenience of the parties as well as to the limited time at the disposal of the Commissioners.

Mr. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to the fact that in 19 out of 22 appeals, recently heard by the Chief Commission, from the judicial rents fixed by the Sub-Commission for County Wexford, on the estate of L. M. B. Colclough, the Chief Commission raised the fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners, and in no instance reduced any of them; and (2) whether he will give the names of the Court Valuers, on whose Report the Chief Commissioners, without inspecting the holdings themselves, so generally increased the judicial rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners who had heard all the evidence in Court, and who had also inspected the various holdings?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the result of the decisions is correctly stated in the first question. I must decline to give the names of the Court Valuers who inspected the holdings in these cases, or to accept the hon. Member's assumption that these officers, and not the Land Commissioners, are responsible for the rents fixed on appeal.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, under the 47th Section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896, an application was made by Bernard Rorke, Drumlane, County Cavan, to the Lord Commission; that the receiver on the Burrowes Estate objected; and whether this objection was made by direction of the Court; and whether any steps can be taken by the Government in the case of encumbered estates to prevent official receivers objecting to the applications of evicted tenants under this section?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The application of Bernard Rorke, referred to in the Question, was objected to by the Receiver in accordance with a ruling of the Land Judge.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the objection was made by direction of the Court?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am afraid I am not able to give the hon. Gentleman more positive information. I understand it was in pursuance of a ruling of the Land Judge.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I will repeat the Question.

DROGHEDA (COUNTY COURT AND QUARTER SESSIONS).

Mr. R. McGHEE (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction existing in Drogheda among business and professional men owing to the great inconvenience of having the sittings of the County Court and Quarter Sessions held in Drogheda on the same days as similar sittings are held in Navan and Kells; and whether some arrangement can be made with the County Court Judges to accommodate the public by having the sittings fixed in these towns on different days?

*The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The clashing of the sittings of the Civil Bill Courts at Navan and Drogheda has occurred this year for the first time for the last ten years, and may not occur again. No dissatisfaction such as is mentioned in the question exists, nor is there apparently any ground for it. As the County Court Judge presiding at Drogheda made arrangements to enable solicitors who had business at Navan to attend there. The dates for the holding of the session are fixed by the Chairman of each county in exercise of the power conferred on him by Statute. The Executive have no power in the matter.

NIGER CAMPAIGN (HAUSA TROOPS).

Mr. P. THORNTON (Clapham): On behalf of the hon. Member for Staffordshire, Leek (Mr. Bill), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, considering the excellent fighting qualities and discipline shown by the Hausa force commanded by Major Arnold in the late campaign on the Niger, the Secretary of War will reconsider his decision to raise another West Indian Regiment for service on the West Coast of Africa, and arrange instead for the new battalion to be recruited exclusively from the Hausa tribes?

*Mr. BRODRICK: Recruits for the West India Regiment are raised wherever the best soldiers of African blood are obtainable. At present the supply of Hausa tribesmen has not been equal to the demand for them as local police.

METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY (OVERCROWDING).

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can take any steps with a view to the prevention of overcrowding in the carriages of the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways?

Mr. HANBURY (for Mr. Ritchie): On a previous occasion my right hon. Friend informed the hon. Member that there was no provision inflicting a penaly on a railway company for overcrowding. It is very difficult to prevent passengers who are anxious to start on their journey from entering one or other of the many carriages which compose a train. The Board of Trade have no power in the matter. They fear that they cannot add anything to that reply.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any one of the States signatories of the North Sea Convention has withdrawn from the Convention or has given notice to withdraw?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): None of the States who are parties to the North Sea Fisheries Convention have withdrawn or given notice of withdrawal from the Convention.

CHANNEL FLEET.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in the event of the Channel Fleet visiting the coasts of Scotland this summer, he will consider the advisability of calls being made at Stornoway and Invergordon?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): I must refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to a similar question last Friday by the hon. Member for the Wick Burghs.

MR. WEIR: I am not aware what was that answer. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would repeat it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: It was that the movements of the Channel Squadron will be determined by naval considerations only, and will not be influenced by Parliamentary pressure.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the present condition of the School Board electorate of Scotland, under which a very large number of ratepayers have no voice in the elections, is the source of grave dissatisfaction; and whether it is proposed to take any steps to amend the law?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): It is not possible to make any alteration in the law regarding School Board elections which would affect the election now in progress, but the subject will receive consideration before the next triennial election.

PARISH COUNCILS (SCOTLAND)

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state when he proposes to bring in a Bill placing Parish Councils in Scotland on the same footing as similar Councils in England in regard to guarantees which may be required by the Postmaster General for improved postal or telegraph facilities?

MR. HANBURY: I hope to deal with this subject in the Post Office omnibus Bill, which will probably be introduced soon after Easter.

CRETE.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether a British cruiser has captured three Greek sailing ships carrying provisions from Loutro, on the south-eastern coast, to Souyer, at the south-east end of Crete; and (2) whether the rules of the blockade extend not merely to the import of provisions but to the transportation of provisions from one part of the island to the other?

*MR. CURZON: We have no information of the reported capture referred to in the first paragraph of the Question. In reply to the second paragraph, the rules were drawn up by the Admirals, and the method of application is left to them. I am unable, therefore, to give a precise answer to the Question, but presumably the action of the Admirals would be guided by the consideration whether the provisions were or were not intended for the Greek troops or insurgent Cretans.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state the grounds on which Germany has declined to join the other Powers in sending troops to Crete?

The HON. MEMBER also asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any of the Powers besides Germany have refused to send reinforcements to Crete; if so, which; and why Britain continues naval and military operations without the full co-operation of the other parties to the European Concert?

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what Powers have sent or have undertaken to send troops to Crete, and what are the grounds assigned for their declining to send troops by the Power or Powers which have so declined?

*MR. CURZON: All the Powers, with the exception of Germany, have throughout been represented by military contingents in Crete, and all without exception by naval forces. We have received no official explanation of the grounds on which the German Government have refrained from sending any military contingent to Crete. Their participation, both in the views and in the action of the European Concert, has been testified by the dispatch of a ship of war, but we understand that as regards the more local question of the pacification of the island, they are satisfied that it should be taken in hand by the Powers who are more nearly interested, the distance and geographical position of Germany being an obstacle to her participation in the same degree and with the same promptitude as other Powers.

Mr. J. MORLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly explain what is meant by the expression "more nearly interested?"

***Mr. CURZON**: The meaning, I think, is that many others of the Great Powers interested are great naval Powers, with obvious interests in the Mediterranean. Of course, Germany does not fall under that description.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Will the expenses of the entire Powers be borne relatively, or will there be an attempt at economy in the Concert of Europe—

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! Notice must be given of that Question.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Mussulmans who were rescued from Candano by the international forces have been armed by the Governor of Canea and allowed to take part in fighting the insurgents; and whether it is true, as stated by Colonel Vassos, that he could and would have rescued the Mussulmans a week before the international troops intervened had he been allowed to make arrangements for their removal to Greece as prisoners of war, so as to secure that they would not be further used as combatants against the insurgents?

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any, and, if so what, information has been received by Her Majesty's Government from the British Consul at Canea with reference to the statement of Colonel Vassos that the besieged Turks who were allowed to leave Candanos and proceed in safety to Canea were armed and sent out to fight the Cretan insurgents, in direct contravention of the written conditions signed by the British Consul and the Commanders of the European Powers acting in the names of their Admirals in Cretan waters?

Mr. CURZON: In reply to our inquiry, Her Majesty's Consul has telegraphed from Candia that he left Canea on the 25th ultimo, and has no knowledge of Candamos Mussulmans having been rearmed after their disarmament had been faithfully carried out as promised by the naval Captains and himself. He adds that the Acting Governor General had many times stated to him that he had no arms to give to Mussulman volunteers, and had complained that no rifles were given to him for that purpose by the European Commanders. Under these circumstances he found it difficult to understand by what means the Candamos Mussulmans could have been rearmed. I do not know what may be the hon. Member's authority for the particular statement of Colonel Vassos quoted by him, which I have not elsewhere seen, but I find that in Colonel Vassos' letter to the Admirals, as published in *The Daily Telegraph* of the 1st instant, he stated with respect to the Candamos Turks, that

> "it is well known that it was through the energetic measures taken by me, in obedience to the orders of His Majesty the King, that the besieged were enabled to proceed safe and sound to Canea."

There would seem to be a discrepancy between this statement and that which has been cited by the hon. Member.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any of the Great Powers have endeavoured to prevent direct negotiations between the Turkish and Greek Governments for the settlement of the Cretan question; and, if so, with what object?

Mr. CURZON: We have no knowledge of any such action on the part of any of the Great Powers, nor have we ever heard of any direct negotiations between the Turkish and Greek Governments.

MINISTERIAL POLICY.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.), who, on returning after illness, was received with cheers from both sides of the House, said: I beg leave to ask the First Lord of the Treasury the following Questions:—First, whether he will state on what date the Turkish troops will be withdrawn from Crete; secondly, whether it is the present intention of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown in a blockade of Greece; and, thirdly, whether Her Majesty's Government will make to the House of Commons a statement on the present situation of affairs in Crete and in Greece, and on the policy of the Government in relation to that situation? [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): Before answering the right hon. Gentleman, he will perhaps allow me to congratulate him on his return to the House. [*Cheers.*] We have, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, represented to the Porte the advisability of withdrawing the Turkish troops, and, without doubt, that end will be eventually secured. No date can, however, yet be fixed—if for no other reason—because at present there are not sufficient European forces in the island to protect Moslem non-combatants, or, indeed, completely to control the armed irregulars. As regards the second and third questions, I have to say that if it appears necessary for the maintenance of peace, Her Majesty's Government will not hesitate to join the other Great Powers in blockading Greece—[*Ministerial cheers*]—but, in the meanwhile, the Powers are making a joint declaration at Athens and Constantinople by which that great end—the end of the maintenance of peace—may, I trust, be attained. The declaration is to the effect that in case of conflict on the Greek frontier, the aggressor will be held responsible for all consequences of a disturbance of the general peace, to which the Powers attach the greatest importance; and that whatever be the consequences of the struggle, they will not consent to the aggressor deriving the smallest advantage from it. [*Loud cheers.*]

Sir W. HARCOURT: I should like an answer to the third paragraph of the Question.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Well, Sir, I think the House is really now in possession of all the material facts both as regards Crete and the general policy of the Government in respect to the preservation of peace on the mainland—[*cheers*]—which the Government themselves have at their disposal, and I do not know, therefore, that I can with advantage add anything to what I have already said.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I was very anxious that we should have had a full statement from the Government of the policy they were intending to pursue, especially having in view the adjournment of the House during the Easter recess—[*Opposition cheers*]—in the course of which very important events might occur. But as the right hon. Gentleman is not prepared to make any statement to the House—[*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"]—and as we deem it necessary in the public interest to elicit the intentions of the Government before the adjournment for the recess, I desire to give notice of a Motion which will secure a discussion of the situation of affairs for the information of the House and the country. I will move an Address to Her Majesty praying that the forces of the Crown may not be employed against the kingdom of Greece or the people of Crete. [*Opposition cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I am not quite sure whether I apprehend that the right hon. Gentleman means by that to raise a definite Vote of Censure upon the Government—[*cheers and laughter*]—for their policy in regard to the Eastern Question. If he does, of course, I shall be prepared at once to give him Thursday, trusting that it will be possible, in view of the holidays, to keep the Debate within the limits of a single day. But I have already told the right hon. Gentleman that the troops of Her Majesty's Government are at this moment employed in Crete in the protection of the peaceful Mussulman inhabitants, and in the control of the Mussulman irregulars. I have already told him that the blockade of Greece, in which we are perfectly prepared to join, is for the preservation of European peace. On these two issues, I understand, the right hon. Gentleman desires to combat the contention we make, and to move a Vote of Censure. If that be so, I will give him Thursday, but, of course, not otherwise. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

Sir W. HARCOURT: My object in asking for a statement from the Government—a statement which has been made by the Governments of other countries on this subject—[*Opposition cheers*]—was that we might judge of what the intentions of the Government were, and so ask the opinion of the House with reference thereto. But at this moment we are not in possession of information—[*cheers and counter cheers*]—as to whether or not the Government intend to employ the forces of the Crown against the kingdom of Greece or the people of Crete. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I hope they do not, and in that case, of course, the Motion is not a Vote of Censure upon the Government; but the Motion is necessary from our point of view, in order to obtain an expression of opinion from this House whether or not that would be a proper and wise policy to pursue. We are of opinion that it is not, and we are perfectly prepared and anxious that the opinion of the House should be taken upon that subject; but really the object of this Motion is to obtain from the Government a full statement of their policy and intentions. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] If the Government were ready, without any Motion of this kind, to make a full statement of their policy and intention, then I should suspend the Motion. If the right hon. Gentleman had been able to answer my Question in the affirmative—that he would give a statement of the intention of the Government which would cover the interval of the recess, when Parliament will not be sitting—then I should not have made this Motion; but if the Government are not able to do so, I feel bound to present to the House an issue on which the Government will have to declare their intentions. [*Opposition cheers.*] It is impossible for me at this stage to say that this is a Motion of Censure on the Government. [*Ironical Ministerial laughter.*] If you will agree with us, of course, it is not a Vote of Censure; but if you disagree from us, well, let us discuss it. [*Opposition cheers.*] I cannot, in the absence of such a statement, declare that this is a Vote of Censure, but it is a question of the most supreme importance, which, in my opinion, the House of Commons ought to discuss before it separates for the Easter recess. [*Opposition cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: It will be impossible that any debate should extract from the Government further information than that which we have given to the House. We have explained in the very clearest manner the intentions we have both in Crete and in Greece, and if the right hon. Gentleman's Motion is simply limited to asking us again to repeat that which we have more than once said in this House, I confess I do not think the ordinary course of public business should be interrupted for that purpose. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Of course, if the right hon. Gentleman will put his Motion on the Paper I will give it further consideration, but my present view is that unless the right hon. Gentleman can say that he is prepared to put on the Paper a Motion condemning the policy of the Government—[*Ministerial cheers*]—it will not be for the public convenience that further time should be, I will not say wasted, but expended in these pointless Debates. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*]

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will put the Motion down on the Paper, as the right hon. Gentleman has been good enough to say he will consider what course he will take in regard to it. The Motion will be put on the Paper, and the object we have in putting it down and desiring its discussion has been sufficiently explained. It will be for the right hon. Gentleman to take the responsibility of preventing that Motion from being discussed.

PAROCHIAL RECORDS (IRELAND).

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether in cases of parishes in Ireland now containing fit and secure buildings for the safe custody of their records, the Master of the Rolls in Ireland, under the special power to deal with such given him by the fifth section of The Parochial Records (Ireland) Act, 1876, 39 and 40 Vic., c. 58, is empowered upon application made to him to order that records that have been removed by him to the Record Office in Dublin may be returned to and permitted to remain in the care of the rector, vicar, or curate (as the case may be) of such parishes, upon being satisfied that fit and safe accommodation has been provided for such records; and, if not, will the Irish Government take steps to initiate legislation giving the Master of the Rolls in Ireland such power, and thus rendering such records more easy of inspection by interested parties?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: Under the Parochial Records Act of 1876, no power is given to the Master of the Rolls to return to the parish records removed to the Public Record Office after the passing of the

Act. He is empowered to return only such as were removed before that date. The Deputy Keeper of the Records is of opinion that the public custody of these records has the advantage over local custody of greater security and of accessibility and economy to persons requiring certificates, and it is not proposed to introduce legislation in the direction suggested.

MILITIA OFFICERS.

Captain PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War (1) whether at the present time there is a deficiency amounting to almost 17 per cent. in the establishment of officers for the Militia; and (2) whether the War Office sanctions regiments making up this deficiency during their trainings by procuring the services of Militia Officers from other regiments whose trainings do not coincide, those officers so serving receiving in addition to their ordinary pay special allowances; and (3) if this is so, whether he will issue an Order amending paragraph 243 of the Militia Regulations, so as to allow in place of, or in conjunction with, the present system Officers of the Reserve of Officers who have to go through an annual training to serve with Militia regiments, whereby a considerable saving in expense could be effected without any loss of efficiency?

*Mr. BRODRICK: The deficiency in Militia officers is 641. The answer to the second question is in the affirmative. As regards the third question, the question will be considered.

BRIGADE OF GUARDS.

Captain PIRIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether those three years' service men who have left the Brigade of Guards, and are now to be allowed to rejoin, will be compelled to refund any deferred pay they may have received, as is the case with all other reserve men who may desire to rejoin their colours?

*Mr. BRODRICK: Men enlisted for three years' service with the colours, if they do not extend their services, receive a gratuity, but are not entitled to deferred pay. If they return to the colours, the whole of their time from date of enlistment counts for deferred pay. They will not be required to refund the gratuity if they return to duty at the call of the Government.

CAVALRY HORSES.

Captain PIRIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the peace establishment of 6,993 horses, required for the cavalry at home, is fully maintaned; and, if not, what is the actual number of horses; and whether, as only about one-half of the establishment of horses are suitable for active service, that is between six and 14 years of age, it is proposed to take any steps to increase the number of efficient horses?

*Mr. BRODRICK: The peace establishment of horses for the cavalry at home is fully maintaned. The assumption that about only one-half of them are fit for active service is inaccurate. No further steps are contemplated.

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS.

Mr. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate what steps he intends to take to prevent the deportation of paupers from Scotland to Ireland?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: I think the hon. Member should be aware, from previous answers, that negotiations are in progress with a view to determining the future treatment of this Question. In my administrative capacity I have no power to alter or to go beyond the existing law.

VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY POSITION BATTERIES (SCOTLAND).

Sir CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what progress has been made in substituting 16-pounders for heavier guns in Volunteer Artillery Position Batteries in Scotland; and whether it is intended to introduce 16-pounder guns into the remaining batteries; and, if so, when it is expected that arrangements for that purpose will be completed?

*Mr. BRODRICK: The urgent demands in other directions have rendered it impracticable as yet to issue 16-pounders to the Volunteer Batteries of position in

Scotland. I am unable at present, to say when the intended arrangements will be carried out, but it will not be lost sight of.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Kerry (Sir THOMAS ESMONDE), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state the amount of money voted by Parliament for Naval purposes since 1885, and how much of it has been spent respectively in England, Scotland, and Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I must refer the hon. Member to the answer given last Friday by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House to a similar Question by the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether any of Her Majesty's ships have been paid off in Irish ports during the period mentioned in the Question?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I do not think that the arrangements which exist provide for the paying off of ships in Irish ports.

GROCERS' LICENCES.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the number of grocers' spirit licences, which the magistrates in Ireland have been compelled to grant, owing to the state of the Law, he will introduce a Measure assimilating the Law in regard to the granting of grocers' spirit licences to that of granting publicans' licences?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I presume the hon. and gallant Member refers to the decision recently made in Ireland, whereby the publican's licences usually taken out by family grocers, to enable them to sell whisky in quantities between two quarts and two gallons, cannot be renewed where they have not carried on under it the *bonâ fide* business of a publican. The propriety of extending to Ireland the provisions of the law in England is under consideration, but I cannot give any undertaking to introduce legislation on the subject this Session.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the practice of taking out these grocers' spirit licences is confined almost entirely to the city of Belfast?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No; I believe that is not the case.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether similar arrangements are being made by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company (Ireland) for the conveyance of third-class passengers by the mail trains, as introduced by the London and North Western Railway Company under the new accelerated mail service to Holyhead?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has no knowledge that arrangements are being made by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company (Ireland) for the conveyance of third-class passengers by the mail trains. The Postmaster General would welcome the conveyance of third-class passengers by mail trains of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company provided that punctuality in the working were maintained, but the matter is one for the decision of the railway company.

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how a passenger taking a third-class ticket at Euston can travel to Cork without paying an extra fare at Kingsbridge?

*MR. HANBURY: I do not know at all. [*Laughter.*]

MR. PATRICK J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can inform the House if any arrangement has yet been come to with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to carry out the proposal for the acceleration of the mails to the southern districts of Roscrea, Nenagh, and Birr; and if he is aware that the Traffic Manager of the Company has intimated that the directors are prepared to entertain any reasonable proposal from the Post Office towards that object?

*MR. HANBURY: No arrangement has yet been come to with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company for the acceleration of the mails to Roscrea, Nenagh, and Birr, but the matter is engaging attention. The Postmaster General is not aware that the Traffic Manager of the Company has intimated that the Directors are prepared to entertain any reasonable proposal from the Post Office on the subject.

VENEZUELA.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether diplomatic relations have been now resumed betwixt Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Venezuela, and if not fully, then to what extent?

Mr. CURZON: Diplomatic relations with Venezuela have not yet been renewed. Her Majesty's Government are ready to give the most friendly consideration to any proposal for their renewal that may be received from the Government of Venezuela, by whom they were broken off in 1887.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS.

Captain DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. J. J. Shee), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will agree to the Return relating to the Land Law (Ireland) Acts which stands on the Paper this day?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Return in question would entail an enormous amount of labour on the Department of the Land Commission, and would not, in my opinion, be commensurate with the results. I am unable, therefore, to assent to it. Some of the information indicated, I may add, is already contained in the monthly published Land Commission Returns of Proceedings and Judicial Rents, as well as in the appendices to the annual Report of the Commissioners, and to the Report of the Select Committee on Land Acts of August 1894.

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT (TERRACE).

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works when the formation of a new doorway to the Terrace, mentioned in the Estimates for this year, will be completed?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. A. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): Preparations have been made for doing this work after the Estimate for the Houses of Parliament Buildings shall have been voted. It may take a month or six weeks to carry it out, and I fear it cannot be done while the House is sitting.

SAMPLE POST.

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the fact that thousands of parcels containing liquids, greases, etc., are daily carried through the sample post and delivered to addressees in the United Kingdom, he can in any way modify the statement recently made by him to the effect that the transmission of such packages as samples is impossible; and whether he is aware that, despite the statement recently made by the Post Office that no satisfactory method of transmitting such articles through the letter post has been or can be devised, many hundreds of thousands of such packages are dispatched by the post offices of every country in Europe in accordance with the postal regulations of such countries, and that British manufacturers desiring to send liquid samples by sample post to British Colonies are compelled to forward them to the Continent for dispatch?

*Mr. HANBURY: I do not know to what statement the hon. Member refers. It was impossible, I said, that substances which it was necessary to pack in airtight canisters should be sent by sample post, but it does not follow that those named by the hon. Member must all be thus packed. The Postmaster General is not aware of the number of packages containing liquids and grease which are sent through the post on the Continent of Europe, nor is he aware of the means adopted by British manufacturers for sending liquid samples to British Colonies. The whole question of the transmission of such articles by post, however, is one which the Postmaster General proposes to consider in connection with several other questions of a like nature.

MONAGHAN GRAND JURY (ROAD REPAIR).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) upon what grounds, or upon whose recommendation, the Monaghan Grand Jury at the recent assizes disallowed the contract entered into for the repairs of 775 perches of public road at Cavancreevy, between Middletown and Ballybay, in the County Monaghan; (2) is he aware that the road in question is in an admittedly dangerous state; and (3) that, as it is the only way by which the farmers of five populous townlands can get their produce to market, will he devise some means of redress for those residents in this district?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the County Surveyor reported to the Grand Jury that the road in question was not a public road, or of general public utility, that it was questionable whether they had statutory power to repair it, and that there were already 1,200 miles of roads under contract in the county. The Grand Jury, after hearing the parties in favour of the presentment, refused to pass it. I have no information as to the second Question; and, as regards the third Question, I would point out that the Government exercises no control whatever over the proceedings of the Grand Jury in matters of this kind.

MONAGHAN UNION WORKHOUSE.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland upon what grounds Miss Margaret M'Manus, lady candidate for the representation of the Clones electoral division of the Monaghan Union, at the late election of Guardians, was forcibly ejected from the Board Room of the Monaghan workhouse; by whose order was Miss M'Manus ejected; and what offence did she commit to render necessary her forcible expulsion?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The only information I have on the subject of the incident referred to is derived from a local newspaper report, from which it appears that Miss M'Manus was removed from the Board Room on the ground that she declined to retire when it was pointed out to her by the Chairman of the Guardians that she had no authority to enter the room. I am not in a position to say who gave the order for her expulsion. Miss M'Manus had been nominated for the office of Guardian, but as she had no qualification for the office, not being a rated occupier, her candidature could not be accepted, and her male opponent was declared elected.

HOWTH HARBOUR.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at a meeting held some time ago in Howth, County Dublin, relative to the condition of Howth Harbour; and whether, although it is admitted that the harbour is in urgent need of being dredged, it is proposed to allocate a sum of only £150 to effect the required operation; and, if so, whether the sum will be increased and the Board of Works dredgers, which are now lying in Kingstown Harbour, will be employed to aid in the work?

*MR. HANBURY: I have seen the Resolution passed at a meeting held on the 7th November, if that is what the hon. Member means. As a matter of fact, I understand that the low-water depths of the Harbour are quite as good as any that have existed in the last 30 years, even at the time when Howth was the centre of a large herring fishery. The low-water depth at the entrance, and for 400 feet along the West Pier from the Pier Head for some distance out, varies from about 8½ to 8 feet; for 300 feet further for some distance out, from 8 to 5 feet; and for 350 feet further, from 5 to 1 foot. £150 is provided in this year's Estimates for removing about 6 inches more at the entrance, and the work will probably be done by the Kingstown dredgers, if the ground be found suitable.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (IRELAND).

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the annual revenue received by the Exchequer on account of tithe rent-charge in Ireland; and whether the amount of this revenue is credited to Ireland in the Return of Irish Revenue; and, if not, why not?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): As I explained in answer to a Question on Friday last, Tithe Rent-Charge, so far as payable to the Land Commission, is not received by the Exchequer, but paid into the Irish Church Fund. A very small amount—under £150 a year—is paid to the Commissioners of Woods, and this is duly credited to Ireland in the Financial Relations Returns.

ARMY REGULATIONS (WEARING THE SHAMROCK).

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state the result of the inquiry into the case of Private Grindle, King's Royal Rifles, who was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment for wearing a shamrock in his cap on last St. Patrick's Day?

*Mr. BRODRICK: The General Officer Commanding at Aldershot reports that Private Grindle appeared on parade with a shamrock in his cap, and was twice ordered to remove it by Second Lieutenant Blundell. This he refused to do, and was then made a prisoner. The Officer Commanding awarded him 168 hours' imprisonment for direct disobedience of an order given by an officer on parade, not for wearing the shamrock, and this he explained to Private Grindle at the time. Any soldier must obey any order given by an officer, but the General Officer Commanding considers that Second Lieutenant Blundell should not have given the order for the removal of the shamrock without referring the question to his Officer Commanding, and has ordered the entry in Private Grindle's defaulter sheet to be expunged.

Captain DONELAN: What compensation will be granted to Private Grindle? [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. BRODRICK: There is no question of compensation. ["Hear, hear!"] Private Grindle committed two errors. In the first place, he did not ask for leave to wear the shamrock, when authority would have been granted; and, in the second place, disobeyed an order given twice on parade. On the other hand, the General Officer Commanding, looking at all the circumstances, has ordered the record to be expunged from the order sheet, so that it will not stand against him in his future service.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the men of one regiment in the service wear roses on St. George's Day?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question which the hon. Gentleman is asking does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: If you will allow me, Sir, I will develop it. [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question is irregular.

Captain DONELAN: Do I understand that the man is released?

*Mr. BRODRICK: His imprisonment is over.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. PATRICK A. M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he could state what was the cost to the State of the inquiry by the Tweedmouth Committee into the administration of postal establishments?

*Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware of the exact cost of the inquiry because the Office of Works, the Post Office, and the Stationery Office are all concerned, the Post Office bearing the cost of the Secretary, travelling expenses, and allowances to witnesses. But little expense was incurred by the Committee except the ordinary charges for reporting and printing the evidence, and paying the travelling expenses and subsistence allowances of the witnesses, as well as the wages of substitutes who did their duty while they were in London.

Mr. PATRICK A. M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what proportion of the estimated cost of the carrying out of the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee will go to the postmen, and what classes of postmen will principally benefit therefrom?

*Mr. HANBURY: The postmen will receive about £150,000 a year out of a total expenditure of £275,000 a year. The benefit will practically extend to all classes of postmen, but those postmen who have not reached the maximum of their scale will derive the greater advantage, as they will henceforth receive a larger annual increment to their wages.

MR. PATRICK A. M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, how, in view of his statement that Post Office employés cannot submit to him their objections to the Tweedmouth Committee's Report by way of resolution, they are to be allowed to present their grievances on this subject to the head of the Post Office Department?

MR. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, considering that no consideration is given to the complaints made by postmen and other postal officials in Ireland, when embodied in resolutions passed by those officials, he will state by what means the complaints of bodies of such officials can be conveyed so as to receive due consideration, and without exposing the officials to loss or censure?

*MR. HANBURY: It has for a long time been laid down by successive Postmasters General—and the rule is believed to be well understood throughout the Service—that representations from the staff on any subject must be in the form of a memorial, and must be transmitted through their immediate superior officers. Such representations properly made receive full consideration from the Postmaster General, and expose the officials who make them neither to loss nor censure.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) is he aware that the Grand Jury of Clare passed a resolution at the Spring Assizes, 1896, requesting the Government to take into consideration the claim of the county to a participation in the grant proposed to be made for light railways in Ireland, and stating that they would advocate a railway connecting Lisdoonvarna with Ennistymon and a railway connecting Ennis with Scarriff; and (2) having regard to the fact that the Government offered a free grant of £62,500, being one-half the estimated cost of the latter line, on condition that the other half of the cost should be provided by the Grand Jury; and that the Grand Jury at the next Assizes rejected by a majority of 16 to 6 the offer of the Government, although supported by the standing railway committee of the Grand Jury, by all the representative elected bodies in the district, by the Town Commissioners of Ennis, and all the traders of the district, who appeared and gave evidence in its favour, while not a single witness was produced against it, whether he can see his way to hold over the grant till another Grand Jury can be summoned to reconsider the matter, or he can take some steps to alter the Grand Jury system?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The fact is as stated in the first question, though I conceive that the Grand Jury in passing the resolution of 1896 had in view a free grant covering the entire cost of construction of the railway. Full warning was given before the meeting of the Grand Jury at the Spring Assizes of this year that the construction of the line from Ennis to Scarriff would not be recommended by the Irish Government to the Treasury, unless a resolution in favour of it were passed at those Assizes by a decisive majority. The grant cannot now be held over, as negotiations are in progress for otherwise disposing of the money.

BALLINROBE AND LOUGH MASK CANAL.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Government will decide as to giving the small sum required for the Ballinrobe and Lough Mask Canal out of the £500,000 already voted; and if any legal difficulty exists in the construction of last year's Act, whether it might easily be removed by non-contentious legislation. May I add that I am not responsible either for the grammar or the geography of the question?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The terms of the Act of last year would not admit of a grant being given in aid of this scheme, except so far as regards the proposed steamer service. The deepening of the bed of the river is more a question of drainage than a question of the establishment of communications, and I am not disposed to bring in a Bill to amend the Act of 1896, in order to enable it to be included. I am, however, in communication with the Congested Districts

Board on the subject, and it is possible that some practical conclusion may be arrived at.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

Mr. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he intends to introduce again this Session the Weights and Measures Bill, which was Read the First time at the end of last Session?

*Mr. HANBURY (for Mr. Ritchie): Yes, Sir; my right hon. Friend proposes to introduce a Measure on the subject referred to, on the lines of the Bill of last Session.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSIONS (IRELAND).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a public statement made at several county meetings of the Irish National Teachers' Association in Ireland, that the pension fund is in a bankrupt condition; and whether it is now proposed to appropriate the arrears of school grant due to the teachers to remedy this state of affairs; whether he is aware that the teachers strongly object to this; and will he take steps to induce the Treasury to place a Vote in Aid on the Estimates for the current year?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member is evidently not aware of the answers already given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury in this matter. The arrears of the School Grant will be appropriated to the Pension Fund, but more than this will be required to restore its solvency. The Treasury, I understand, are prepared to deal with the question, and I have no reason to believe that the teachers are dissatisfied, or have any cause to be dissatisfied with the arrangements proposed.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Michael Muldowney, who after repeated trials was convicted in Sligo, in 1884, for an agrarian offence, and has now been 13 years in penal servitude, has been most exemplary in his conduct in prison; and whether his case will be included amongst those to whom the clemency of the Crown will be extended on the commemoration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The convict named in the Question was convicted at Sligo Summer Assizes of July 1884, of the crime of murder, and was sentenced to death, which sentence was commuted to one of penal servitude for life. He had previously been tried at the Spring Assizes of that year, when the Jury disagreed. The convict committed breaches of the prison rules in 1885 and 1888, and these are the only offences recorded aganst him since his incarceration. I know of no reason for extending to this prisoner any exceptional treatment?

DISTRESS (LISTOWEL UNION).

Mr. M. J. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he has received during the past six months several resolutions from the elected and ex-officio Guardians of the Listowel Union, showing the great distress that prevails in the union; (2) whether an application has been made for a loan to purchase seed oats, owing to the total failure of the oats crop last year; (3) whether he is aware that the potato and other crops were seriously injured both in quantity and quality owing to the disastrous harvest of 1896; and (4) whether any steps will be taken by the Government to alleviate the great distress in existence in the Listowel Union, as was shown by the joint reports of landlords and tenants?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Resolutions have been received as stated in the first Question; and an application has been made by the Listowel Board of Guardians for a loan for seed oats on the ground stated in the second Question. The extremely wet weather of the Autumn of 1896 was generally unfavourable to the harvest, the oat crop being particularly affected in Listowel Union. The Returns of the numbers relieved give no indication of the existence of abnormal distress in this Union. The numbers on out-door relief as a matter of fact are less at present than at the corresponding period of last year, and so far, no necessity is shown for supplementing the resources of the ordinary Poor Law.

MR. FLAVIN: May I draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that the rates have increased from £1 in 1880 to £3,000 in 1895?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

POOR LAW AMALGAMATION BILL (IRELAND).

MR. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Poor Law Amalgamation Bill, whether it is his intention to appoint a Committee to make inquiry into the working of the existing Poor Law in Ireland; and whether he is aware of the prevailing opinion as to the necessity for classification and other reforms in connection with the present state of the Poor Law there?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not intended to appoint a Committee to make inquiry into the working of the Poor Law system in connection with the Poor Relief Bill shortly to be introduced. It is hoped that the effect of the Bill will be to remove one of the difficulties standing in the way of classification and of other reforms.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether it is the intention of the Education Department to formulate, for the guidance of school managers, any suggestions or regulations in reference to the associations to be formed under the Voluntary Schools Bill when it becomes law; whether these models for associations, if drawn up, will be distributed to Members of Parliament; and whether, in view of the numerous new duties imposed upon the Education Department by the Measure referred to, an increase in the staff of examiners and inspectors is contemplated?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): As soon as the Bill becomes law, the Committee of Council will lay upon the Table a Minute which they have prepared on this subject. An increase in the staff of the Education Department is contemplated.

LOANS (IRELAND).

MR. J. J. SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the interest charged on loans under the Irish Church Act 1869, in respect of "instalment mortgages," and under the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Acts, 1870 and 1872, and the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, which was reduced by the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, from 4 per cent. and 3½ per cent. respectively, to 3⅛ per cent. still remains at 3⅛ per cent.; and, if so, what has been the annual profit to the Treasury on loans under these Acts for each of the last three years for which the Returns are complete?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The interest charged on all the classes of loans referred to in the Question remains at the rate of 3⅛ per cent. per annum. Repayments in respect of loans under the Irish Church Act 1869 are carried to the Irish Church Fund, and no question of profit or loss arises regarding them. Repayments in respect of loans under the Acts of 1870, 1872, and 1881 referred to are carried to the Local Loans Fund. The total amount of interest received by that fund from all classes of public loans barely suffices to meet the interest of Local Loans Stock, together with the charges which the fund has to bear; and, it is certain that the fund makes no profit, but more probably a loss, from the classes on which 3⅛ per cent., the lowest rate of interest, is charged.

ADMIRALTY COOPER (BULL POINT, DEVONPORT).

MR. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that H. Williams, the cooper at Bull Point, Devonport, has been given notice of discharge on account of the work being reduced; whether, if this be the case, the conditions under which he was appointed after probation, *i.e.*, pay and value of quarters, will be taken into consideration;

and whether, in view of his good and long services and the compulsory retirement, ample remuneration and provision will be made to him?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): A cooper being no longer required at Bull Point, H. Williams has been discharged. The maximum gratuity allowed in such cases under the Superannuation Act, 1887, is one week's pay for each year of service, and this has been awarded him. The terms of the Act prevent the inclusion of the value of quarters in the calculation of the gratuity.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (WITNESS CASES).

Mr. R. A. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been directed to the case of Ecroyd *v.* Coulthard, recently in the court of Mr. Justice North, which, though it occupied only seven whole and part of two other days in the hearing, yet, owing to the rule laid down of taking witness cases only three days a week, was protracted over four weeks from 23rd February to 23rd March, involving the attendance of those engaged in it, including some 30 witnesses who had either to be brought backward and forward from Cumberland, or kept here for a prolonged period at great additional expense to the litigants; and whether some change could be made so as to prevent such inconvenience?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight): I have made inquiries into the case mentioned in the Question of the hon. Member. I find that the breaking off of the hearing of the case was exceptional, and due to the fact that Mr. Justice Romer and Mr. Justice North happened to be both engaged in trying witness actions. I am informed that no witnesses need have been in town before the 9th or after the 17th. Although such interruptions cannot at all times be avoided, I am satisfied that the learned Judges do their utmost to avoid unnecessary delay or expense, and I do not think that any steps can be taken to lessen the possibility of such inconveniences at times being occasioned.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the proposed new Financial Commissioners are precluded by the terms of the reference from taking, if they see fit, the view taken by the majority of the late Commission, viz., that, under the terms of the Act of Union and the Consolidation Act, 1816, the Exchequer expenditure in Ireland (except when similar expenditure is defrayed by local rates in Great Britain) cannot properly be taken as a set off to excess of revenue contributed by Ireland?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I do not think the terms of reference can bind members of the Commission as to any decision to which they may come with regard to the matters submitted to them.

ELECTION PETITIONS.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now say when the proposed Inquiry into the procedure on election petitions will take place?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that I think there should be a Select Committee appointed to consider the questions to which he refers. But the terms of reference cannot be worded as my hon. Friend seems to suggest. They ought, I think, to be strictly confined to the method of inquiry.

Mr. BARTLEY: Is the Committee likely to be appointed this Session?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Yes, Sir. I think the sooner the better.

*Sir C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): Will the Government move?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think it would be convenient for the Government to move.

GROCERS' CERTIFICATES (SCOTLAND) ABOLITION BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Wednesday 14th April till Wednesday 30th June.

MOTION.

VOLUNTEERS.

Bill to declare the effect of the provisions of the Volunteer Act 1863, with respect to Rules for Volunteer Corps, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Powell-Williams and Mr. Brodrick; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 187.]

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Select Committee on the Industries (Ireland) Bill nominated of,—Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Carson, Mr. Richard Cavendish, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Lough, Mr. Archie Loyd, Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, Mr. James Roche, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Parker Smith, Viscount Valentia, and Colonel Waring.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE BILL.

Select Committee on the Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill nominated of,—Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Hozier, and Mr. Paulton, with two members to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (INCREASED GRANT).

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (SIR JOHN GORST, Cambridge University) rose to move:—

> "That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament of an addition to the grant payable to School Boards under Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act 1870, by increasing the sum of 7s. 6d. therein mentioned by 4d. for every complete penny by which the rate therein mentioned exceeds 3d., provided that the said sum as so increased shall not exceed 16s. 6d."

He said: This Resolution is for the purpose of enabling the Government to bring in a Bill to amend the 97th Section of the Elementary Education Act, 1870. Now, the principle of that Act was to divide the cost of education between the Consolidated Fund and the sums raised by the localities. It is, of course, well known that there are persons who contend that the whole cost of education ought to be borne by the State, and that the localities ought to bear no part in it. That is not the policy of the Act of 1870. Right or wrong, the principle of that Act is that there should be a certain contribution from local sources, in order to meet the sums which are from time to time dispensed out of the central Treasury. But it was foreseen at the time the Act of 1870 was passed that there would be certain districts upon which the local burden of education would press unduly, and it was with the view of meeting that difficulty that the well known proviso of the section so much discussed last year was devised. It was supposed at that time that the average cost of educating a child at the elementary schools was 28s. or 29s. annually, and it was estimated that of that amount it was fair to call on the local authorities to contribute as much as 7s. 6d., and it was thought that a contribution of 7s. 6d. from the local authority, added to the amount paid from the central Treasury, would suffice for the maintenance of the school. It was also thought at that time that a rate of 3d. in the pound would be a fair burden to ask the localities to bear, and it was known that in nearly all cases a rate of 3d. in the pound produces far more than the 7s. 6d. which it was thought the localities would have to contribute. The proviso of the 97th Section was virtually on the part of the State to guarantee that a rate of 3d. in the pound should be the share of the local authorities. That was the idea when the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 was passed, but the result of experience has proved that the authors of that Act were altogether mistaken in their calculations. One of their calculations only is correct—namely, that the general average produce throughout the country of a rate of

3d. in the pound is a good deal more than 7s. 6d. The sum is about 14s.; so that now, as then, the number of schools in which a rate of 3d. in the pound fails to produce the amount of 7s. 6d. per child are exceptional cases, and can be dealt with comparatively easily. The calculation of the authors of the Act of 1870 as to the cost which would be thrown on the localities by having to fulfil the duties of assisting to educate the children was an entire miscalculation. The cost of maintenance alone in carrying on the schools after they are built, of elections of officers, offices, and all establishment charges providing for the cost of merely running the schools rose from 28s. on the average to as much as 50s. for every child, or very nearly double. No doubt one of the principal causes of this increase is the increase in teachers' salaries. It is an increase that some people lament, and say that it is extravagant. But the salaries of teachers, like all other salaries, are regulated by the laws of supply and demand; and the great extension of education in this country, and the great demand for teachers, have necessarily raised the salaries which teachers demand, and have a right to be paid. It is no use lamenting over the cost of teachers. We may have our own opinions as to whether they are worth the salaries. People may think that they are not worth the money they have to pay; but there is the fact. If you want the teacher, you must pay the salary which the market requires you to pay; and it is no use complaining of the amount which the economic conditions of the country enable the teacher to ask for his services. The salaries must be paid, or you cannot command their services. Besides this, the authors of the Act of 1870 do not seem to have taken into consideration other than the maintenance expenses; but in a great many places the School Boards have had to build schools, and in order to do that, they had to borrow money, and the money so borrowed has to be repaid by instalments out of the rates. On the average all over England and Wales there is a sum of no less than 3d. a child paid by the School Boards for the cost of the schools in which they are educated. Besides this, there are numerous other expenses. There is the expense of administration, the elections, the clerks, the offices, the legal expenses, and so forth. There is the cost of the evening schools, and lastly there is the cost lately placed on the School Boards by Parliament—the cost of the blind and deaf children. The result of this is tending to increase the expenditure of School Boards. Although the Imperial contribution has risen from an average of 20s. to 30s. a child, the average expenditure which has to be provided for out of local sources amounts to no less than 42s. on the average, and the rate which is levied on the average to pay this local contribution amounts to 9d. in the pound. If the Committee will allow me, I will give them a typical instance in the average school district. A rate of 3d. in the pound will produce 14s. a child, but the rate on the district is 9d. in the pound, and of that 9d., 3d. in the pound goes to repay the expenses of building, 4d. to maintain the children, and 2d. for administration, elections, and so forth. But the Committee would be much mistaken if they were to think that this average typical school district represents anything like the condition of all school districts in the country. Nothing is more remarkable than the extraordinary variety as to circumstances between one School Board district and another. In the first place, the rates which have to be levied vary from nothing at all—some School Board districts pay no rates—up to, I believe, a record sum in rural parishes of 2s. 5d. in the pound. The reason for that extraordinary variation of rate is that the locality of the School Board has very different calls upon it in one place and in another. There are some school districts in which the School Boards practically build every school in which children are taught. There are others in which a considerable number of Voluntary Schools have assisted in the education of the children, in which Voluntary Schools have been made over to the School Board, thereby saving a considerable amount of expenditure. There are some districts in which the School Boards have no schools at all, and thus they have no expense at all. Then a consideration arose as to the size of the school. Large schools can be run on the average per child much cheaper than small schools. Where a School Board has to maintain a very small school the rate of maintenance has gone up in an extraordinary manner. The salaries of teachers vary very much from place to place. In a large town like London the salaries are very high. I do not intend to give the Committee a lecture on economics, and I do not say why the salaries vary much in different places; but, as a matter of fact, they do, and some School Boards have to pay for their teachers at a very great deal higher rate per child than others. Then there is a great deal of difference in the administration. In some places there are constant elections which have to be paid out of the rates; in others an election is unknown; in some they have to provide offices, extravagant clerks at an extravagant rate for the small number of children they have to educate. I should like to give the Committee an example or two to show the extraordinary variety which exists in the circumstances of these School Boards. Take the maintenance of scholars, and the rate which is paid for maintenance. In West Ham the rate for maintenance is 30s. per scholar, and that requires a rate of 1s. 1d. in the pound. In Hull the rate of maintenance per scholar is only 7s. 4d.—less than a quarter —and the rate levied is only 3½d. in the pound. In Leeds the cost of maintenance is 16s. 10d. per scholar, and the rate levied is little more than 6d. In the Forest of Dean the maintenance is 11s. 4d. per scholar, and the rate necessary is 8d. in the pound for maintenance. To contrast with these cases I think the case of Sutton-in-Ashfield, in Nottinghamshire, may be given. The rate of maintenance per scholar is only 1s. 9d., and the amount of rate necessary to provide for this is only 1½d. in the pound. I call the attention of the Committee to this case. The rate of maintenance for children in the schools is only 1½d. in the pound, but the whole rate levied is 1s. 3d. in the pound in that parish. There are three Board Schools and one National School. The rate of 3d. in the pound is very low— 3s. 6d. per Board scholar; but the School Board rate is 1s. 3d. in the pound, of which 8½d. is for building, and 1½d. for maintenance. There is an adjacent parish—Kirkby-in-Ashfield. It has four Board Schools and no Voluntary Schools. A 3d. rate in the pound produces 4s. 2d. per School Board scholar. The School Board rate is 16d. in the pound. Of this 9d. is for building, and a little over 1½d. for maintenance. Just contrast with these cases that of Bethgellert in Carnarvonshire. There there are four Board Schools, one transferred from Voluntary management. A rate of 3d. in the pound gives 6s. 5d. per scholar. The School Board rate required is 19d. in the pound, of which 5½d. is for building, and 12d. for maintenance, equivalent to a maintenance charge of £1 5s. 11d. per scholar. The high rate for maintenance is no doubt due to the fact that the school is very small. These examples will show the Committee how extremely diverse are the circumstances of one School Board from another. That being so, it must be quite plain that a mere alteration of figures in the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 would be no remedy for the existing evil. If those figures were altered, it would have the effect of giving a considerable amount to many school districts where the rates are very low, and where presumably they do not want any very great increase in the subsidy from the Imperial Government, while it would leave the school districts where the rates are very high with a very insufficient subsidy to meet their wants. Therefore the Government concluded that they must measure the necessities of a School Board district by the amount of rate which it is necessary to levy, and that they must give a higher amount of assistance to places where the rates are high, and less assistance to those where the rates are low; because if a district gets off with a rate of 3d. or 6d., or even 7d. or 8d., it is very much better off than the average School Board district, the average rate being no less than 9d. Now I come to explain what the Bill is for which the resolution is asked. It proposes that in all cases where the rate is 3d., and does not rise as high as 4d., to leave the schools exactly as they are under the present law—they will receive the same assistance, neither more nor less. In any case in which the rate has risen to 4d., the Government propose to read the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 as if the sum of 7s. 10d. were substituted in that section for 7s. 6d. Thus they will bring more schools within the purview of the Act, because every school in which the 3d. rate does not amount to as much as 7s. 10d. will come within the purview of that clause. The relief given will be the difference between the product of a 3d. rate and 7s. 10d., and not the difference between the product of a 3d. rate and 7s. 6d. That will deal with all schools where the rate is up to 5d.; but when you come to a rate of 5d. in the pound, the Government propose to read the section of the Act of 1870 as if for 7s. 6d. were substituted 8s. 2d. [*Laughter.*] That will bring more schools within the purview of the Act, and will give them a very much larger measure of relief than those under the Act already gain, and so the sliding scale will go up 4d. for every penny in the rate. The higher the rate the higher the figure, rising by 4d. for every penny, until we get to half-a-crown, which is the highest we provide for. If any district has a 2s. 6d. rate, the Act will be read as if 16s. 6d. were substituted for 7s. 6d., which will bring in a very large number of schools having a very high rate, and will give them a very large amount of relief. I have said, more than once, that the average rate is 9d. in the pound. There are in England and Wales 769 School Board districts in which the rate is above that average. There are 69 boroughs and 700 parishes in which that is the case. Of these districts, no fewer than 555 will get relief under the sliding scale of the Bill. Of all the School Board districts in England and Wales, there are 369 which have rates of more than 1s. These comprise 21 boroughs and 348 parishes, and of them 324 will receive relief under this Bill. [Mr. Whittaker: "How many of the 21 boroughs will receive relief?"] Twenty; there is only one borough that does not get relief. [An hon. Member: "How much will the boroughs receive?"] That depends entirely upon the product of the rate at 3d. in the pound. If that product is very high, and if it is a rich district, it will not receive very large relief. I do not know that the Committee will be able to discuss the operation of this automatic sliding scale until they have seen it in the Bill. [Mr. Acland: "What is the total estimated sum?"] The total sum which it is estimated will be distributed by means of this sliding scale is £153,895. [*Opposition laughter and cries of* "Oh!"] The annual grants under Section 97 are estimated to amount to £43,283, and, therefore, the extra amount distributed by the Bill will be £110,602. [*Laughter.*] The object of the Bill will be to relieve those School Board districts which are unable, out of the rates, to provide as easily for the education of the children as more favoured districts. I think when the Committee come to examine the effect of the Bill in different places, they will be satisfied that the Government have fulfilled their promises, and have made sufficient, and, I think, very ample provision—[*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cheers*]—for those districts which find any difficulty in performing their duty under the Act of 1870 and the education law of the country. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution.

Mr. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said it was clear from the right hon. Gentleman's statement that before they could trace the working of the proposal in its details they should have some return showing the effect of the Bill upon the different districts to be benefited. ["Hear, hear!"] While poor School Boards would welcome the Bill, and while nobody in the House—and especially the representatives of School Board districts—was likely to refuse any offer which the Government might make, he thought it would be found that the School Boards throughout the country, who did such admirable educational work for nearly half the children, would, when they came to express an opinion on the proposal, pronounce it to be exceedingly inadequate. [*Cheers.*] To what did it amount? Both from that side of the House and from hon. Members on the other side, they heard at the opening of the Session a desire expressed that there should be an equal grant to Voluntary Schools and Board Schools all round. But the Voluntary Schools Bill was reckoned on the basis of 5s. a child, while the Board School Bill was reckoned on the basis of 1s. per child. The sums were distributed in both in what was called the proportion of necessity. He would like to ask what the Government took to be a case of necessity when applied to Board Schools? There was necessity, as they had been told, arising from want of efficiency; there was necessity also arising from too heavy payments either out of the pockets of the voluntary subscribers or of the ratepayers. As to efficiency, they were told that Voluntary Schools were in a pretty fair state of efficiency where they were paying their teachers well. But how was it that in the ratepayers' schools there was a fair amount of efficiency? The answer was, that the Education Department had been able to obtain on the whole—though there were, no doubt, certain exceptions in the case of the smaller School Boards—a higher rate of efficiency and a higher rate of payment for the teachers because the rates were behind the Board Schools. But was that any reason why Board Schools should receive only one-fifth of the relief given to Voluntary Schools? The right hon. Gentleman told them the other day that the pressure of the Education Department was not departmental pressure, but was the pressure of public opinion. That was to say, public opinion had brought about better payment of teachers and a fair state of efficiency in Board Schools, and yet in that House public opinion rated that efficiency at only one-fifth of the value of that which was assigned to Voluntary Schools. What was the position of the mass of the population in regard to this question? One-third of the population—something like nine millions of people—paid no School Board rates at all. In these districts relief was to be given at the rate of 5s. per scholar, and a large part of the money was to come out of the urban districts, many of which were to get little or nothing by the Bill. Of the 20 millions who lived in School Board districts 19 millions paid over a 3d. rate and 16 millions paid over a 6d. rate, which was not very much below the average rate. How many of these people were going to get effective relief out of this £110,000? They would be very glad if the specially poor districts, where there was an exceptionally high rate, would get a special share of relief under the Bill; but when their case was satisfied, if it was satisfied under the Bill, an extremely small amount would be left for the great mass of the borough or urban populations, where the rates ranged from 6d. to 1s. 2d. He was, therefore, not surprised to hear the Lord President say in the House of Lords last Tuesday that

> "the larger number of School Boards in our opinion stand in no need of relief, or, if they do, the relief is to a very large extent in the hands of those by whom the School Boards are elected."

[*Ministerial cheers.*] That was the doctrine of the bottomless purse, which, if carried to its extreme, would mean that School Boards needed no help at all from Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] What had happened in many districts? There being no rich people to build Voluntary Schools, School Boards had to be founded, and in these places they now told the ratepayers that they must provide relief for themselves. He should have thought these were just the very districts which required more relief even than they provided for Voluntary Schools. Nobody had pointed out more clearly than the right hon. Gentleman himself how the system worked in the country districts and in many of the poor districts of the great towns. Whatever relief was given to certain districts it was impossible to maintain that a sum of £100,000 was an adequate reward to the ratepayers for the efforts they had made in founding and carrying on their Board Schools. There were two millions of children in the Board Schools and two and a-half millions in Voluntary Schools. To the Voluntary Schools they gave £700,000, and to the Board Schools about £120,000. But the sacrifice to keep going the Board Schools was three times as great as the sacrifice of the voluntary subscribers. The cost per head of the children in Voluntary Schools provided by annual subscriptions was 6s. 9d., while the cost provided by the ratepayer in maintenance alone was 19s. 8d. What they now offered him, instead of 5s. per head, which would be £500,000, was not much more than one-fifth of that sum. They were asked why they interested themselves in the relief of the ratepayers. Relief, no doubt, should be first of all to make up efficiency; but it should also be given to those who had incurred a burden, and he thought that principle might be applied to all classes of schools. But when it was said that they were the kind of people who ought to speak of the relief of the ratepayers, his answer was that education stood on an entirely different footing, and had so stood ever since the Act of 1870 in regard to different classes of ratepayers. From the very first the State undertook the duty of providing a large share of the cost of education from the Exchequer to assist the localities to a very large extent. They had been constantly and quietly raising the Imperial contribution per child in Board and Voluntary Schools from 14s., at which it stood 18 years ago, to 19s. or 20s., at which it stood now, and he had never heard anyone protesting against it. Under the Free Education Act they raised it at a bound to 10s. per child in both classes of schools, and no one had complained. And what they said now was that as they were giving Voluntary Schools 5s. per child, why should they not extend the same amount of relief to School Board districts, especially as their sacrifices—their compulsory sacrifices—had been much larger than the sacrifices of the supporters of Voluntary Schools? He had said "compulsory sacrifices," for many hon. Gentlemen forgot the fact that of the 2,500 School Boards existing in the country, 1,000 had been compulsorily formed—that was to say, they had been formed, not by the will of the ratepayers, but under an Act by which the State took the education of the people into its hands, and if that had not been done there would now be two millions of children altogether uneducated. Even if they took the basis of Section 97 and treated it as the right hon. Gentleman had treated it, it would form a somewhat uncertain basis. He meant that, if they took places like Hull, which the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned, with a School Board rate of 9d., they would find that it was already entitled under the existing Act to a certain amount of money, because its rateable value happened to be low—it having been assessed low by the assessment committee in comparison with other towns—and he did not think that Hull, with its rate of 9d., deserved more money under Section 97 in proportion to other towns like Halifax and Sheffield, which had a rate of 1s. 2d. That difficulty would remain unremedied until that Section—which was a temptation to certain districts to have themselves assessed low in order to get a certain amount of money—was more completely modified. The right hon. Gentleman had said in the course of one of his speeches on the education question that localities were very jealous in insisting that they should be treated with equality in those matters at the hands of the Imperial Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman would very soon experience the truth of that statement. London, for instance, would be very much surprised to hear how it was going to be treated under this Bill. [*Cheers.*] It would be found that boroughs, taking them as a whole, would contribute to this Imperial grant a share out of all proportion to that which they would receive; and the policy of taking money from the towns and distributing it elsewhere—which had begun under the Agricultural Rating Act of last year—would be extended under this Bill. [*Cheers.*] He did not think that any locality was likely to refuse any dole, however insufficient, which the Government might offer; but he was sure many localities would make great complaints when they found how little they were likely to receive—as compared with other localities—under the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not believe that the great mass of the School Board districts could possibly accept this grant of 1s. per child, instead of the grant of 5s. per child given to the Voluntary Schools, as a just and final settlement, and he did not suppose that even the Government could for a moment imagine that this arrangement was one that would not have to be revised again. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.), who was received with Ministerial cheers: Certainly the old proverb that there is no zeal like the zeal of the convert is happily illustrated in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers and laughter.*] He first denounced us with all the eloquence at his command for not having brought in a general Bill for the relief of the ratepayers in every district where there happens to be a School Board; and the whole pith and substance of his speech—so far as it had pith and substance—consisted in an attack upon us for pursuing the policy of giving relief, whether to Voluntary Schools or to Board Schools, where the relief is required, instead of making a general dole throughout the country, on the basis of 5s. per head all round, which the right hon. Gentleman publicly admits is, and is intended to be, nothing else but relief to the ratepayers. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman expresses his inability to understand the difficulty which we on this side of the House have constantly felt, and have sometimes expressed, at the amazing change of opinion which has taken place on the Front Bench opposite on the subject of rating since they occupied us last year with long Debates on the Agricultural Rating Bill. The surprise of the right hon. Gentleman is very curious, because I should have thought that a person of far less acuteness than the right hon. Gentleman would have seen that if we had not felt that difficulty at which he expressed surprise, we should have had either an extraordinary lack of memory or an extraordinary lack of appreciation of the character of the argument which was addressed to us on the subject of rating last year by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers and laughter.*] What was the character of that argument? There was but one; and it was repeated day after day and night after night on the introduction of my right hon. Friend's Bill, on the Second Reading of that Bill, upon almost every Amendment in Committee, and upon every Amendment also on Report; and, finally, it was finished in this House on the Third Reading of the Bill, only to make its appearance, still flourishing and still gathering strength, on every platform in the country. [*Cheers and laughter.*] What, I ask, was that single argument? It was that every relief of the rates went into the pockets of the landlords. [*Laughter and cheers.*] "But," says the right hon. Gentleman, "this House has always distinguished between rates for educational purposes and other rates." Has this House provided machinery by which the rates spent on education are to have a different destination from the rates spent on other purposes? Has this House ever provided a plan by which, if it be true that the rates spent for sanitary purposes go into the pockets of the landlords, while the rates spent for School Board purposes should not go into the landlords' pockets? You have only to put the question to see what the answer is; and how any Gentleman could come down to this House and, without a blush on his ingenuous countenance—[*laughter*]—have the courage to say it is perfectly monstrous that we should not bring in a general Bill for the relief of the rates in every part of the country, having ringing in his ears the speeches of his right hon. Friend and his own speeches, is more than I can imagine. [*Cheers.*] If there was a pretence that this is a Bill for the improvement of education I could, at any rate, go some way towards understanding the right hon. Gentleman's position. But neither this Bill, nor the Bill the right hon. Gentleman proposes, is primarily, essentially, and fundamentally an Education Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said over and over again that we ought to relieve the ratepayers. With that I agree. But he also said that he wanted 5s. a head all round for every School Board in the country.

MR. ACLAND: As a basis.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: As a basis. But the right hon. Gentleman, with all his courage, cannot pretend that 5s. per head all round is required to increase the efficiency of education in London, Manchester, and Liverpool, and in the great body of the School Board districts of the country. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman admits that the Bill he wants is not an Education Bill, but a Ratepayers' Relief Bill. [*Cheers.*] I say that that is grossly inconsistent with every argument that was advanced by right hon. Gentlemen opposite last year. I do not think it is true that the relief under the Agricultural Rating Act of last year will, even in the long run, go to the owners of agricultural land; but I cannot doubt that there are large urban districts in this country where the immediate effect of contributions of this sort will be to go, not into the pockets of the ground landlords, but into the pockets of owners of cottage property, and of those who let out lodgings and houses to working men. I have no objection to that. I see no reason why the ratepayers should not be relieved. But do not let us have this hypocrisy—do not let us say that the relief of agricultural rates goes necessarily into the pockets of the rural landlords, whereas directly we begin to relieve urban rates, by some mysterious economic reasons, that relief is not to go into the pockets of the owners of house property, but is to go straight to the occupiers. [*Cheers.*] That is the first observation I have to make. The second observation I have to make is that, both in this Bill and in the last Bill we introduced, we distinctly came forward with the view of relieving necessity where necessity exists. The rival policy advocated by right hon. Gentlemen opposite is to give public money where, by common consent and universal admission, necessity does not exist. I am ready to stand by our policy as against the policy of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. ["Hear, hear!"] I am prepared to defend it on any platform in the kingdom, if it is challenged. [*Cheers.*] While it may be a good thing that the whole cost of elementary education should be borne out of public resources—[*cries of* "No!"]—I do not pronounce upon that—while that may be, and, perhaps, ought to be, the idea towards which the country should struggle, meanwhile the business of this House is to preserve the system of elementary education started in 1870—a composite system, partly consisting of Board Schools and partly of Voluntary Schools. And this House ought to come to the relief of the necessity of those parts of the system, be they Voluntary or be they Board, which are really in urgent need of such public assistance. I am bound to say that, while I am not surprised, I am slightly pained, at the ingratitude shown by hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] One would really suppose that these Gentlemen had, through a long, honourable, and laborious public career, been perpetually pressing upon the Government of the country the necessity of relieving, not only poor Board Schools, but all Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Is there a single Gentleman opposite, with, perhaps, the exceptions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean and one or two others who are returned by very poor School Board districts, who made a single election speech or issued an election address in which this great cardinal point of policy was mentioned? [*Cheers.*] No, Sir; the only people, so far as I know, who have ever suggested to this House the propriety of doing something to relieve the very poor districts in which there are School Boards are the Government now sitting on this Bench—[*cheers*]—who last year brought forward a Bill in which a proposal of this kind was contained—a proposal which, indeed, did not meet with universal approval, but which was admitted by the great body of public opinion to be an effort to carry out a wise and judicious policy. [*Cheers.*] What have we done this year? We have brought forward a proposal which doubles, or more than doubles, the amount that was given, or suggested to be given, last year to poor Board Schools, while, at the same time, we have only increased by one-fifth the sum to be given to Voluntary Schools; and my right hon. Friend has laid before the Committee a method of giving that increased sum which will undoubtedly make it go in much larger measure to the districts which require it than the plan which we adopted last year. It is impossible to make any arithmetical comparison between the needs of the poor Voluntary Schools and the needs of the poor Board Schools. The two things are on a different basis. They are really incomparable, and any attempt to arithmetically compare them is, and must be, founded on a fundamental misapprehension of the real elements of the problem. But I frankly admit to the House that, while our proposal has been met apparently with scorn on the other side because of its inadequacy—[*Opposition cheers*]—I am rather afraid that when the working out of the Bill comes to be seen, the managers and those interested in Voluntary Schools will say, "How comes it that whole districts will receive so very much more than that 5s. a head which is the average, which is the estimated basis, of relief to Voluntary Schools?" And they will ask us, "Do you really hope or believe that such large sums will be distributed to the most needy Voluntary Schools as will undoubtedly be distributed to the most needy Board School districts?" That, however, is not an argument which the House are in a position to appreciate until they see my right hon. Friend's Bill in print, and until they are in a position to test by actual examples the manner in which it works out. I would venture to suggest, therefore, that it would be desirable to defer until that time any attempt at a detailed discussion of my right hon. Friend's proposal, and that we should, if the Committee think fit, hurry over the preliminary stages, so as to permit my right hon. Friend to get his Bill into print, which he cannot do before Thursday. The House and the country will then be in a position, which they cannot be before the Bill is printed, to estimate both the character of the machinery which my right hon. Friend proposes, and the result which that machinery will have in at least the poor School Board districts, the ratepayers of which so much need aid in various parts of the country. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) thought the First Lord of the Treasury would have added much greater weight to his recommendation that the Committee should hurry over this stage of the Bill had he not made his speech first. ["Hear, hear!"] He had made a detailed and provocative speech, which must be replied to. [*Cheers.*] He observed one thing about the right hon. Gentleman. If anything in this world ever did—he did not say anything really ever did—disturb or ruffle his temper, it was the approach on that side of the House to any allusion to the question of the urban ratepayer. [*Cheers.*] If hon. Members on that side of the House, some of whom represented the largest ratepaying constituencies in the kingdom, in any way alluded even to the burden of rates, or the assessment of rates, or the payment of rates, the right hon. Gentleman almost regarded it as a personal attack. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"] He was speaking perfectly good humouredly—[The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "Hear, hear!"]—and the right hon. Gentleman always referred to the Debates of last year, and thought that he had brought the discussions to a close by saying that hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House maintained that all relief given to the ratepayers must go into the pockets of the landlords. That was not the contention last year. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] The contention last year was that the relief given to agricultural rates in respect of agricultural land would go into the pockets of the owners of that land. [*Cheers.*] When the right hon. Gentleman said that their policy was not only really inconsistent with what was done last year, but that he wondered that anybody, without a blush, could make the statement that there was any distinction between urban rates and the agricultural rates which were dealt with last year, and that that must be some unexplained economic theory which nobody had ever explained, all he could do was to refer him to the standard work on the subject written by his own colleague, the present First Lord of the Admiralty. [*Cheers.*] That right hon. Gentleman had proved to demonstration that there was an essential, permanent distinction and difference between rates levied upon land and rates levied upon houses, and that there was also a permanent distinction between rates which were levied subsequently to the commencement of a tenancy and to an agreement for a tenancy when those rates were not in existence. That was the case of London and other large towns. The urban rates in London, he did not hesitate to say, broadly, were paid by the tenants and not by the landlords. ["Hear, hear!"] The rates paid upon cottages, shops, warehouses, manufactories and mills in this country were in the main paid by the tenants and not by the landlords, and, as in the great bulk of the long tenancies of this country, the conditions were fixed long before the education rate was levied, it could not be for a moment contended that in those cases, when the terms of the tenancy were fixed and the amount of rent determined having regard to the rates in existence, they contemplated the burden of education rates. The right hon. Gentleman also said they wanted to relieve necessity, and that the ruling guide of the Government would be to relieve the claims of necessitous Voluntary Schools and necessitous Board Schools. On the other hand, they contended that there were necessitous ratepayers. He was not going to oppose a grant of £100,000 or £150,000 to relieve any class of ratepayers, but he should hold himself at liberty to ask that the relief should be greater, and that it was only just and fair treatment that they should have a large concession. The burden of the education rate in this kingdom had increased, and was increasing to such an extent that the necessitous ratepayers were entitled to come to that House and ask for relief. Last year the Government would not have got their Agricultural Rates Bill passed if they had not promised a Commission to inquire into the grievances of the urban ratepayer, and now they had turned a deaf ear to their application. He wished to say a word on the speech of the Vice President, and he hoped he would pardon him if he said that he absolutely did not understand that speech. He had conveyed no idea to his mind how the scheme would work out. He did not know the class of schools which would get relief, and he did not know the amount; but what he gathered was that all the large towns were to be excluded.

Sir J. GORST: No, not all.

*Sir H. FOWLER said Leeds and Hull were the exceptional cases, but, so far as the general ratepayers were concerned, they would get no relief. He did understand that the Voluntary Schools were to have £600,000 and the Board Schools £100,000. What was the reason for this limitation? They knew without waiting for the Budget that the revenue had increased by three millions, and he certainly thought they had a right to plead on behalf of the ratepayers. Whether that was a just contention or not, he should invite the Vice President to give them some detailed statement as to how this scheme would work out. Taking the average brain, he did not think hon. Members understood from the speech what it was the Vice President proposed. He had intended to move that evening for a return which would have given the House the information, but he learnt that the return was opposed.

Sir J. GORST said he had had no notice, and he proposed to confer with the right hon. Gentleman.

*Sir H. FOWLER said he would be happy to confer with the right hon. Gentleman on matters of detail. He should like to say a few words as to the claim for relief, and, having quoted Mr. Forster's original proposal, and as amended by Mr. Gladstone, which was based upon equality of grant to both classes of schools, the right hon. Gentleman said that his case was that they should give to Voluntary Schools and Board Schools equally. They gave the Voluntary Schools £600,000, and he said the rated schools were entitled to an equal amount from the Exchequer, not only upon the principle of equality, but on the ground of justice to the urban ratepayers. It was absurd to speak of the bottomless purse of the ratepayers; there was no such purse. The ratepayers felt the burden very severely. The large towns which were now heavily rated would get no relief. Take Manchester, where the Voluntary Schools cost the subscribers 4s. 3d. per head, but the cost in the Board Schools to the ratepayers was 16s. 2d. per head. In Birmingham the rate was £1 0s. 6d.; in Birkenhead it was £1 0s. 10d.; and in Bristol it was £1 2s. 2d; but in Hull it was only 7s. 4½d.; yet Bristol was to get no relief. London paid £1 17s. 10d. per head. It was said London was wealthy, but London was also poor. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought the London School Board was entitled to relief from this Bill. The pressure upon the ratepayers in all these towns was so great that they ought to share in the relief. It would be perfectly fair to argue whether they should attempt to discriminate between the School Boards—some to have more and some to have less. He thought the House would now see that it would be impossible to take the Second Reading of the Bill on Monday. They must have ample time to consider the Bill and communicate with their constituents on it. The right hon. Gentleman said he should be prepared to defend the Bill on any platform in the country. [The First Lord of the Treasury: "The principle."] He should be delighted if the right hon. Gentleman would go down to Wolverhampton and defend the giving relief to one class of schools in that town while the other class of schools was not to have a penny. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) said that the right hon. Gentleman had not succeeded in showing that, while the relief to the rural rates went to the landlords, the relief to the urban rates did not go to the landlords. It was far more probable that the money given in relief of the urban rates would go to the landlords, because there was in towns such a thing as compounding the rates. He was quite willing that that should happen to some extent; but it was not reasonable to blame the Government for not doing this year what they were blamed for doing last year. There was a prevalent fallacy among hon. Gentlemen opposite that it was a sign of grace in a district to have a School Board. It simply showed that the inhabitants cared too little about education to support Voluntary Schools. The sacrifices made by the supporters of Voluntary Schools were far more meritorious than those made by the ratepayers for Board Schools, because the latter were grudgingly and compulsorily given. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman and the Government on the skilful way in which the Bill was framed to get rid of one of the most forcible objections to the Agricultural Rating Bill of last year. It could not be said that this Bill gave help to the poor and rich districts alike. It gave help where the rate was high, and in proportion as the rate was high. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton had misunderstood the Vice President in declaring that the large towns would get little help. Out of 21 towns where the rate was over 1s., 20 would receive relief. London was the exception, and it was not likely that London would make itself necessitous to become entitled to this relief.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said that the question was one of extreme complexity, and they must wait to see the Bill before discussing its details. The Vice President had spoken of "the rate levied." The rate returned to the Education Department was not the rate levied in the ordinary sense. For instance, in one of the poor School Board districts in his constituency, the precept of the School Board was 2s. 10d., and that was the amount which would be returned in the education statistics. But the amount levied on the ratepayers by the rating authority was not 2s. 10d., but 3s. The right hon. Gentleman had explained a very elaborate sliding scale; but he had given no reason why it should stop at the particular point mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman—a rate of 2s. 5d. The Bill would give an extra £110,000 to the Board Schools. That was a very much smaller sum than had been expected, or than had been mentioned at the deputation from the representatives of the poor School Boards last year. There would be great disappointment felt on this point.

Mr. C. A. CRIPPS (Gloucestershire, Stroud) wished to make a few remarks on the argument addressed to the Committee by the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton. Following through the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, he claimed him as an advocate on all future occasions for doing all he could to relieve the burden of rates in this country, whether in agricultural or urban districts, because his argument went to that extent. How was it, and in what way did he draw a distinction upon the point of principle between the relief given in the Agricultural Rating Act of last year, and the relief given to other ratepayers either in urban or country districts in various parts of this country? As to whether the relief went to the tenant or to the landlord, they had to look in each case to the economic conditions before they could determine to whom the relief would be given. Was it not the case that, if the right hon. Gentleman excepted the case of the compound householder from the general criticism he applied, he really excepted from any hardship, so far as rates were concerned, all the poorer ratepayers in our large towns?

*Sir H. FOWLER said he based his argument mainly on the case of the small, heavily burdened and rated shopkeepers, not the artisans living in 3s. a week houses.

Mr. CRIPPS said his contention remained the same. If one took the poorest classes in the large towns, the criticism the right hon. Gentleman applied, as regarded the burden of rates, did not attach to them at all, because in that case the rates were not paid by them, but by the owners of conpound tenements. Everyone, of course, sympathised with the poor shopkeeper, and every class of ratepayer where the burden was heavy, but they forgot to draw the distinction. He might take out of the right hon. Gentleman's Bill any effect of this Bill, or of the other Bill, on the poorest class of ratepayers, or the class of ratepayers who would be the poorest if the incidence of the burden fell upon them at all, namely, the artisans and workpeople in our large industrial cities.

*Sir H. FOWLER: The Voluntary Schools Bill does not deal with rates.

Mr. CRIPPS said the other Education Bill dealt most distinctly with rates in this sense, that if they destroyed the Voluntary Schools they would place a greater burden on the rates of the country. In laying down a proper test, they had to consider not only the amount of the rate at so much per pound, but the resources and economic conditions of the area within which the particular rate was levied. That was the scheme of the Vice President's proposal; that was the real meaning of the sliding scale which was to deal with this very difficulty—that you could not say the burden of rates was to be gauged simply by the amount of the rates, but you must have both the amount of the rate and the power of the particular area to bear that amount. The suggestion to give so much a head all round would, he admitted, be a fair and an equitable way of dealing with the matter, but he understood the objection raised to that was the fiscal strain thrown on the national Echequer. [Sir H. Fowler: "Three millions!"] Suppose they could not give that all round, was not the next best method the method proposed by this Bill, and that which had recently passed through the House? They took the test in the one case of necessity measured by efficiency; in the other they took the test of necessity measured by the strain on the particular ratepayers in the particular locality; and were they not thus dealing with the two classes of schools on as fair and equitable a basis as possible? For his own part he hoped that in the long run education would be regarded as entirely a national concern, and that it would be a universally accepted doctrine that it was the duty of the national Exchequer to find the funds for our education system. He knew there were many Members who did not adopt that view; but, if the right hon. Gentleman held it, he ought to welcome the two Bills proposed by the Government this Session as marking the longest step in that direction which any Government had ever taken at one time as regarded the education question. If also it was the right hon. Gentleman's desire to save the ratepayers as far as possible in connection with heavy burdens generally, and more particularly as regarded this topic. Then, if he took the two Bills together, one as saving our voluntary system, the other as giving relief to the rates where the ratepayers were most heavily burdened, the Government ought to have his support on both those Bills as carrying out in the best possible manner the principles which underlay the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. Upon the details of the proposal nothing could be said at present, but he believed everyone on that side of the House, and a large number of hon. Members opposite, would not only not oppose the Bill on the Second Reading, but would give what assistance they could in order that it might become law as soon as possible. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said the hon. and learned Member had given one of the strongest and ablest arguments for condemning the policy of the Government in separating the two Bills, because his whole argument was that these Bills should be one cohesive whole, and should interdepend upon principles which applied equally to both. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of the necessity of dealing equally and fairly with the Board Schools as well as with the Voluntary Schools; they assented to that, but he ventured to say this proposal was not a fair and equal settlement of this question. The sliding scale system which the Vice President had introduced was a good system, and he thought it would be recognised as a valuable idea by those practically acquainted with the details of this subject, but the proper method, he thought, would have been to give the grant of 5s. per head all round to begin with, and on the top of that to apply this sliding scale. He would give some striking instances of how this proposal would work out. Northampton would get a contribution of about £300 from the Exchequer towards her rate expenditure of £9,000; and, at the same time the Voluntary Schools of Northampton were getting under the Voluntary Schools Bill £1,004, in respect of their voluntary subscriptions of only £1,262. That was a proportion enormously in favour of Voluntary Schools. Kettering would receive about £180 towards a rate expenditure of £3,100, while under the previous Bill the Voluntary Schools would receive £371, in respect of a contribution of £400. In another town in his division, Wellingborough, the Exchequer would contribute about £150 towards a rate expenditure of £2,700, while the Voluntary Schools would receive £252 in respect of voluntary contributions of only £230. The great city of Manchester, in respect of a rate expenditure of £75,000, would get not a single farthing in aid from the Exchequer, whereas the Voluntary Schools of Manchester would receive £11,000 under the other Bill. Salford, in respect of a rate expenditure of £22,000, would receive nothing; whereas the Voluntary Schools would get £5,000. Liverpool, in respect of a rate expenditure of £77,940, would get nothing; while Voluntary Schools would get £13,000. So they might go on through all the large towns of Lancashire. Then Nottingham, in respect of a rate expenditure of £42,000, would receive about £3,400; while the Voluntary Schools there would receive £3,300 in respect of subscriptions of only £2,996. Leeds, of course, was an exceptionally favourable case for the right hon. Gentleman, as that town had been on the border line of Section 97 of the Act of 1870 for a long time. The rate was 14d., the standard would be 10s. 10d., and the sum contributed by the Exchequer in respect of a rate expenditure of £80,700 was £5,000, while £4,900 would be contributed in respect of subscriptions amounting to £5,365. Sheffield, with a 13d. rate, would be on the 13s. 6d. scale, and in respect of a rate expenditure of £63,500 would get the magnificent contribution of £1,835; while the Voluntary Schools would get £5,000 in respect of subscriptions of £3,106. Bradford would get nothing in respect of its rate expenditure of £47,500, while the Voluntary Schools there would get £5,000 in respect of subscriptions of £5,365. Could anything be more ludicrous than the absolute disproportion of these figures? He wished to insist on this obvious truth, that rates were one form of local effort just as subscriptions were another, and the aid of the State ought to be equally given to both. They complained of the action of the Government in not having brought in one Education Bill dealing on definite principles with the two classes of schools, for in any final solution of the Education Question the ultimate relations of the two classes of schools to each other must be considered and means must be provided for one class of schools being merged into the other. He was strongly in favour of merging Voluntary Schools into the Board School system, and he regretted that the Government had not taken the logical course of dealing with all schools on equal and fair principles, and enabling them to consider the Education Question as a whole.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said he humbly shared with the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton the inability, on first hearing this proposal, to comprehend the full bearing of the Bill, and he thought it would be very greatly for the convenience of the House if before they came to the Second Reading his right hon. Friend would lay something on the Table by way of memorandum, explaining its effect on the various towns and School Boards coming under its operation. He contented himself by taking note of the fact that this Bill constituted one further departure from the principles of the Act of 1870. ["Hear, hear!"] That was a matter of congratulation to him. The general principle of the Act of 1870 was that all schools, Board or Voluntary, should be treated on the same footing so far as the Imperial grant was concerned, and under this Bill it was clear that a distinction was to be made between school and school in the money to be awarded out of the Exchequer. The most striking feature in his right hon. Friend's speech was an omission which might or might not correspond with what the Committee would ultimately find in the Bill. It was that there appeared to be no conditions laid down for any school which was to receive this increased aid.

SIR JOHN GORST: The aid is not received by the school, but by the School Board.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said that there appeared to be no conditions laid down in the Bill on any School Board which was to receive the money. The Bill in fact differed from the Bill they had discussed to aid Voluntary Schools. That Bill contained many conditions, but here was a Bill to aid Board Schools, and there were no conditions of any kind laid down. In the former Bill, for example, there was a condition as to efficiency. He had no desire to drive up the standard of education in England at the present moment, but there were undoubtedly certain School Boards which would receive the aid under this Bill which were open to the charge of not being altogether efficient. He reminded his right hon. Friend of a passage cited in his speech on the Second Reading of the Bill last year from the Report of Mr. Brodie, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. Mr. Brodie said that—

> "the climax is reached in the country Board Schools. True, indeed, it is that a few of these are well managed, but in by far the most there is no management at all worthy the name; there is no progress, but the reverse."

This was a most complete condemnation of certain School Boards in the country. He admitted that this did not apply to the poor Board School districts in the towns. There the education was efficient; in some cases he feared it was extravagant; but surely a condition of another kind ought to be laid upon them. The Bill was going to be offered to the country in order to relieve the ratepayer. Let the Committee see that it did relieve the ratepayer. If there were no conditions in the Bill that the money would relieve the ratepayers—for example, the ratepayers of West Ham—he feared that the first result would be, not to relieve the ratepayers, but to raise the standard of education in West Ham. That might be a good or bad thing; but it would not be relief to the ratepayer. He thought it was worthy of consideration when the proper time arrived, and when the Committee was voting large sums of money, to see that the money was going to be used for the purpose for which Parliament intended. The idea was that School Boards themselves ought to act as a check on expenditure. Nothing of the kind could be more untrue. He regretted that the Government had not attempted to deal with the education question generally; but when the time did come, one of the things they would have to deal with was the constitution of the School Boards. The idea that there was a real, effective representation of the ratepayer and a real power to check expenditure on the part of the School Board system was wholly illusory. As a matter of fact, the great bulk of the ratepayers never went to the poll at all; in London not 50 per cent. went to the poll at the last election; and the effect of the cumulative vote was not to elect the persons who generally served on a local body, but persons who thought of education and nothing else. As a result School Board expenditure was run up to a most inordinate height. Though his right hon. Friend had taken every kind of circumstance into account he did not take into account the mismanagement and the extravagance of the School Boards themselves. Surely, a large part of the variation which the right hon. Gentleman mentioned was due to their mismanagement; and he thought that the Committee ought to consider whether proper conditions should not be imposed on the School Boards when more money was being granted. This Bill, like the last Bill, had no element of finality about it. [*Opposition cheers.*] The reason why the borough of West Ham, for example, increased its expenditure and threw such an enormous burden on the rates was, he supposed, because of the competition of School Boards outside. That competition would go on. There was no reason why the London School Board should not increase its expenditure every year. It had always done so, and he presumed it would do so for many years to come. In these circumstances, whatever sum might be allotted to West Ham or any other borough would in a few years be compensated for by the rise in other School Boards, and the same difficulty would be produced. As soon as the Committee had passed these purely temporary measures of relief, he hoped that the Government would seriously set to work to consider what ought to be done in order to put our educational system, whether in the Board Schools or in the Voluntary Schools, on a really permanent basis. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said that many hon. Members would disagree with the noble Lord as to his desire for finality in the expenditure on education. He did not suppose that there should be a general debate on a wide question like this, but he urged on the right hon. Gentleman the absolute necessity, before the Committee discussed the Bill in detail, of giving it the effect of the somewhat complicated system of relief on the various School Board districts. He found some difficulty in understanding what was the object of the Bill. Was the Bill for the improvement of education, or was it a Bill for the relief of the ratepayers? If it was a Bill for the improvement of education he sympathised with a good deal of what the noble Lord had said if there was to be omitted from the Bill the conditions under which the money was to be applied; but he did not gather from the speech of the right hon.

Gentleman that there were no such conditions in the Bill. If the Bill was for the relief of the ratepayers, there were two aspects in which to look at it. First, there was the aspect as to the total amount of relief; and secondly, the method of distribution. He thought that everyone interested in the School Board side of the question must regard that relief as extremely inadequate and extraordinarily unequal as between two classes of schools. A Bill of this kind, introduced with so narrow a margin of relief to the Board Schools, was a fine on those districts which had themselves established School Boards, or had been compelled, by the legal machinery of the country, to establish School Boards. It was impossible to judge of the distribution of the money until a return was furnished showing how it would operate. He urged that the Government should give a return of the details connected with the districts. Both as regarded the method of distribution and the total sum to be given, the Government were doing a great injustice to the urban districts. If the Bill was for the relief of the rates, what a totally inadequate sop it was! The urban districts had been most seriously hit in regard to rates, and now there was an opportunity to relieve them they received no relief at all. The fact that London got no relief whatever under the Bill made him feel that the method of distribution under the Bill was extremely bizarre. But they had not only to consider one rate, but the incidence of all rates. By not taking a comprehensive view of the matter, and dealing with it in a haphazard way, Parliament was piling up additional difficulties as regarded rating. Without the return which he had pressed on the Vice President of the Council, and which he would be able to give, the House would be arguing upon a totally one-sided view of the question.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) recognised in the proposal before the House an effort to meet a great want. How it would work out they could not judge until they saw the Bill, and, even then, they would need experience of its operation. But it was a grievous pity that the matter should be dealt with piecemeal. The Measure before the House was to adjust certain grievances and put certain wrongs right, but in doing this it would create other anomalies which would be felt almost as much. It would do away with certain anomalies and injustices, and create fresh ones. London was rich, taken as one financial entity, but many neighbourhoods of London were as poor as those districts which it was intended to relieve. In his constituency practically all the ratepayers were small, and the relief to them would be practically nothing. But the matter should be treated from the educational rather than from the ratepayers' point of view. A great opportunity was being lost of placing this great educational question on a final basis. The only possible solution for it was that they should once and for all recognise that the State must pay the whole cost of the secular teaching it required. If this were done all the various anomalies would be done away with. They were getting near it. The present was another step in that direction. The whole question of education in both Voluntary and Board Schools should be put on such a basis as to do away with those anomalies. The proposal before the House was in the right direction, but a further Measure would be necessary to deal out fairness to all classes.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) joined with the noble Lord the Member for Rochester and the hon. Member who had just spoken in regretting that our educational system was being dealt with in this piecemeal way. The time had come when the Government should set themselves to settle the matter on broader, fairer, and larger lines. Section 97 of the Education Act of 1870 had not worked with particular satisfaction, and he regretted that the Government should have based their proposal upon it instead of proposing a scheme which would have been juster and fairer. In the opinion of Members on the Opposition side of the House the amount to be given to the Board Schools was totally inadequate. Their expenditure amounted to £4,750,000 a year, and £110,000 a year was to be given to meet the strain thrown upon them. The metropolis would receive no benefit. Whatever might be the rateable value of London, the rate of 11d. on a house of £20 was a heavy burden. The whole burden and incidence of the rates should be considered. In his own constituency the rates amounted to 6s. 6d. in the pound, and if relief was to be given, the ratepayers in his constituency ought to have equal or greater relief than certain other parts of London. The ratepayers' burden in London had been borne generously, and the people deserved to be relieved. Under legislation already sanctioned by that House, London, as compared with Lancashire, received £70,000 less than it was entitled to, and, as the result of the Government's two educational Bills, the London taxpayers would be some £200,000 out of pocket. The London ratepayers had done a great educational work, and deserved as much consideration as the voluntary subscribers, who paid £80,000 in contributions, and would receive £45,000 in relief. The London ratepayers, who paid 2¼ millions, would receive no relief. The Bill was so complicated that the Government could not expect Members to be in a position to discuss the Second Reading next Monday. He trusted that they would be supplied with facts and figures and mathematical tables so that they might see how the Measure would work.

*Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) observed that, however inadequate hon. Members opposite might think the grant, the Government by proposing it were doing what the Opposition failed to do when they had the opportunities. ["Hear, hear!"] He rose chiefly for the purpose of emphasising the importance of the question asked by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. Whether the new grant was to be estimated on the actual rate levied for School Board purposes and paid by the ratepayer, or on the rate as paid to the school authority, was a very important question. He also wished to know whether in a district where a rate of 2s. 6d. was levied, the increase in the grant would be 9s. per scholar, or whether the total grant would be 9s. per scholar. Would the new grant be in lieu of the sum now paid under Section 97, or in addition to the grant paid under that section? He understood that it was to be in addition. He recognised with pleasure that much care and skill had been exercised in drafting this scheme, which would deal with School Board districts in proportion to their necessities. Section 97 of the Act of 1897 was founded on two principles which were just, the rateable value and the number of children in a Board School district. Now, for the first time, a third principle was established—namely, that regard must be paid to the degree in which the School Board of a locality had endeavoured to discharge its duty, as evidenced by the actual rate in the pound levied. Hitherto some School Boards had conducted their affairs with a ridiculously small rate, and yet obtained as much relief as where the rate was large. The towns where the schools were chiefly voluntary, and where large grants would be made under the Voluntary Schools Bill, would receive but little assistance under this Measure. The necessities of School Board districts arose from their having to make nearly all the provision for the education of the children, and such districts would be relieved. A necessitous School Board district was one where there was a low rateable value and where nearly all the children were educated in Board Schools. Where a large amount would be paid under the Voluntary Schools Bill, a small sum would be paid under this Bill, and where a small amount would be paid under the former Bill, a large amount would be paid under the present Measure. He hoped that the Government would insist on getting the Second Reading of the Bill before the Easter recess. If a thing were good, it was just as well to have it quickly, and he was not prepared to postpone the relief of the School Boards for a single month. This was not an intricate Measure, what it involved being a mere modification of one or two words in a section with which many of them had been familiar for 26 years. He should be glad to record his vote in favour of the proposals of the Government, although he abstained from expressing an opinion as to their adequacy until he had the Bill before him. He should be sorry to obstruct a Measure which did something more than had been done hitherto in the direction of imposing on the State a duty which it ought to fulfil.

*Mr. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) regretted that the hon. Member who had last spoken should have thought it necessary to overlay the rest of the matter of his speech with highly partisan remarks with regard to the action of the late Liberal Government in not giving special grants to poor School Board districts. The hon. Member had overlooked the important point that the money which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to find for that purpose was, to a considerable extent, provided for him by the Measures of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had not under his control the same extensive funds which his successor was able to use in many cases for the benefit of the country. He was one of those who desired to compliment the Vice President for the ingenuity of the scheme by which he proposed to define necessity in relation to Board School districts. He wished, however, to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he had considered the case of those districts where a rate of 3d. in the pound produced less than 1s. per child in average attendance? He had discovered two such districts, and there were a great many more just upon the border line which might at any moment pass that line. In the two cases he had discovered the rate of 3d. in the pound produced less than 1s. per child in average attendance. What was the result? It was that the more extravagant the School Boards were, the more money they spent, the less they would have to contribute themselves, and the only limit to their possible extravagance was the 2s. 5d. limit of rate. Some steps should be taken to guard against such instances as that. While he, for his part, heartily approved of the ingenious arrangement for estimating the necessity of the Board Schools, he could not see why School Boards should receive only 1s. 8d. per scholar on the number in average attendance, whereas the Voluntary Schools received 5s. per scholar. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester had made an admission which wild horses would not have dragged from him during the discussions on the Voluntary Schools Bill. The noble Lord had stated that this Measure was a departure from the principle of the Act of 1870, which established equality as between the two classes of schools. He took it that so far as that statement was correct it was a valuable admission. But, as a matter of fact, what the Act of 1870 did was this, it was to establish equality between all classes of districts. It did not proceed upon the school as a unit but upon the school district. What was the proposal in the present Bill? That certain School Board districts were to recive an average grant of 1s. 8d. per child. Under the Voluntary Schools Bill every Voluntary School district received an average grant of 5s. per child. He did not stand there so much to argue the case of the ratepayers as a whole. He argued the case as a ratepayer in a particular district. Why should a ratepayer in a School Board district receive less relief, or, rather, have to bear a heavier school charge than another ratepayer in a Voluntary School district? The burden of education was primarily a district charge. The Government in their last Bill distinguished between district and district, and they laid it down that certain districts should receive, at the expense of the taxpayers, greater relief than other districts. This Bill was intended to remedy that discrepancy of charge on the districts. It only remedied it in the case of the School Board districts to the extent of one-third, the relief given being 1s. 8d. per child instead of 5s. He did not think any reason had been given why exactly the same amount should not be allocated to the School Boards as was allocated to the Voluntary Schools, although the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman for dividing the money was at first sight a valuable one. His criticism went to two points; first, that the Bill did not give enough, and secondly, that the amount of relief given should be in respect of the actual amount paid by the ratepayers and not the nominal amount of the rate. In the Agricultural Rates Bill of last year they on that side of the House raised the point many times in Committee as to whether the amount given—as they said—to the landlords was to be half of the nominal amount of the rates, or half the actual amount paid, because the two amounts differed. The Government in giving relief to the landlords determined they would give half the maximum amount. He appealed on behalf of the School Boards that the same measure of justice should be meted out to them, and the very same method adopted in relation to this Measure as was adopted in the Agricultural Rates Bill, School Boards receiving relief in respect of the actual amount paid by the ratepayers, and not in respect of the nominal amount stated.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the hon. Member for West Ham had stated that the operation of this Bill would be such that districts which got little under the last Bill would get a great deal under this. That was not so. Take the case of Birmingham. It got little under the last Bill—considering its size and importance—only £7,000, but it would get nothing at all under this Bill. Again, London got £40,000 under the last Bill, which, taking into account the size of the metropolis, was very little, while under the present Bill it got nothing at all. He was not able to eulogise the Bill so freely as some hon. Members on both sides of the House had done. He believed the principle of the Bill was not right, and he believed the total amount given was altogether inadequate. The principle did not work out nearly so equally or evenly as had been generally supposed. Take as an example the hard case of London in this matter. The hon. Member for Poplar said that London had contributed one-fifth or one-sixth of all that had been given under the last Bill and of all that had been given under this Bill. London had done more. He believed that London had paid one-fourth of all that had been given; and, even more, the ratepayers of London had made contributions to the Voluntary Schools under the last Bill which amounted to something like £14,000 or £15,000. So that, in addition to the contribution which was given by the Treasury to the Voluntary Schools, the ratepayers of London had to give another contribution of £15,000 to the Voluntary Schools. How did the London Board Schools fare? In the London Board Schools there were 415,000 scholars. There were 178,000 scholars in Voluntary Schools, and the subscribers contributed £60,000. London Voluntary Schools would receive relief to the amount of £45,000, but London Board Schools would receive nothing. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not find means of dealing with the case of London. The rates on the London Board Schools amounted to £94,000; and if the Government wanted to acknowledge the great work done for education by the London ratepayers let them pay this sum out of the Imperial Exchequer. There were a great many necessitous Board Schools in London. Why was nothing to be done for them? The argument was that because there were certain more fortunate districts in London, they should bear the burden of the poor school districts. But surely if they applied this theory to the rich ratepayers they should apply it equally to the rich subscribers. The Government did not ask the rich subscriber to go to the relief of the Voluntary Schools, but they thought it fair that the rich ratepayer should carry the burden of the schools in the poor districts. The well-to-do ratepayer had done his duty already. He had not only provided schools for his own district, but had provided schools in the poor districts of the East End. He got absolutely nothing from the Government, but a fresh burden was flung upon him. The rich subscriber had not done his duty because he had not helped the poor schools, and yet all the favours of the Government were reserved for him. *Primâ facie* a great deal more relief ought to be given to Board Schools in poor districts than to poor Voluntary Schools, because, looking at the two systems broadly, the Board Schools developed in places where there were not sufficient subscribers to erect schools voluntarily. The Bill was based on a wrong principle. They ought to give 5s. per child for every scholar in Board Schools, just as they had given it in the case of Voluntary Schools.

Sir J. GORST replied to various questions put to him. He had been asked what he meant by speaking of the rate levied. He hoped he did not use that expression, because the rate was neither the rate levied nor the rate paid, but the rate specified and described in the 97th Section of the Act of 1870. That rate was subject to two conditions. First, it must be required; and that had been interpreted to mean needed for the annual expenses of School Boards; and, secondly, it must be actually paid to the School Board by the rating authority. When he spoke of the sliding scale and of the amount of assistance depending upon the amount of the rate, he ought to have explained that by that he meant not the rate levied, not the rate paid, but the rate which was needed for the annual expenses of the Board and which was actually paid by the rating authority to the treasurer of the Board.

*Sir C. DILKE: So that arrears on the one side and money carried forward to balance on the other are excluded?

Sir J. GORST: Yes; it was merely the rate needed for the actual expenses of the year. The right hon. Baronet had asked why the scale stopped at 2s. 6d.

The answer was, first, that, so far as they were aware, there never had been a rate needed for the annual expenses of a School Board of more than 2s. 5d. The next reason was that they thought that the school rate itself ought to stop at 2s. 6d. [" Hear, hear ! "] Let the Committee consider the case of a very poor district with a 2s. 6d. rate. So far from there being any case of a rate of 3d. in the pound producing less than 1s. per child, he was told that there was no case—possibly with one exception—where such a rate produced less than 3s. per child. A half-crown rate at the rate of 3s. per child for 3d. in the pound levied would produce 30s. per child. Then there would be the subsidy under this Bill of 16s. 6d., less 3s. ; so that the total sum which the School Board would get would be 43s. 6d. per child. That, he believed, was a sum quite large enough to cover any possible case which might arise ; and that was the only reason he could give for stopping the rate at 2s. 6d.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would give a Return showing how the scheme would work out before the Second Reading?

SIR J. GORST said he would be very glad to give any Return which could be laid before Parliament. But there were 769 School Boards in the country, and if they delayed the Second Reading until the Education Department had worked out the way in which the Bill would operate in every one of these districts, he was afraid they would have to delay the Second Reading for a very long time.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said he had no desire to delay the Second Reading, and should be glad to see it taken as soon as possible, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would lay some Papers on the Table in order that they might be able to see more in detail how the scheme would work out.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said that a short time ago he was present when a powerful deputation laid before leading Members of the Government the case of the necessitous Board Schools, and he remembered that the hon. Member for West Ham was their spokesman, and presented the case with great force and ability. He thought the Members of that deputation would be very much disappointed to read the speech he had just made, and found that he was prepared to accept almost cheerfully this Measure, and was even anxious to hurry it on to the Statute Book. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester complained that the Measure contained no conditions on which the grant was to be made, and insisted strongly that there should be some guarantee that the moneys so granted would be used for the purpose of promoting the efficiency of the schools. Now he recalled the fact that when the Voluntary Schools Bill was before the House they, on the Opposition side, expressed anxiety of the same kind ; but they were met with only vague phrases. They were asked to have the fullest confidence in the Education Department. He congratulated the Vice President on his reappearance in his proper place as Minister of Education. But he was not able to congratulate him on his speech, for a less adequate or less enthusiastic speech on such a subject he had never heard. He supposed if the right hon. Gentleman spoke frankly he would say it was impossible to be enthusiastic in introducing such a Measure as this. Perhaps he anticipated what the First Lord said subsequently, that this Bill, like the Bill which preceded it, did not profess to be an Education Bill—that they were both simply money Bills. That in his opinion was not their defence, but their condemnation, and he was glad hon. Members opposite, as well as on his own side, had expressed disappointment that the Government had not handled the question in a bolder and more comprehensive Measure. He suspected that originally the Government had no intention of introducing this Measure, but were forced into it by public opinion. During the Debates on the first Bill they were bidden to wait until the Government had an opportunity of fulfilling their promise to introduce a Measure for the relief of necessitous Board Schools. The Government had fulfilled their promise by the miserably inadequate Measure now before the Committee. Look at the different effects following the passing of the two Measures. In a large number of cases subscriptions to Voluntary Schools would cease, for they would no longer be necessary, managers obtaining all they wanted from the State ; but in the case of ratepayers no such relief would be given. In some cases under the

Bill ratepayers would get no relief at all, notably in London; and in other cases they would get very inadequate relief. Why was this distinction made between the two classes of supporters of the schools of the country? The answer would be that the School Boards had the rates to fall back upon, and hon. Members talked about rates as if they came down from Heaven or were dug out of the bowels of the earth; but the money came equally from the pockets of ratepayers as subscriptions came from the pockets of subscribers; but with this difference, that subscribers contributed or not just as they chose, and gave such an amount as they thought proper according to their means; while quite otherwise was the position of the ratepayer, who contributed because he was compelled to do so by law, and in very many cases his contribution was far in excess of his means; simply because circumstances compelled him to occupy a highly-rented house, or, if a shopkeeper, the exigencies of his business compelled him to occupy highly-rented, and highly-rated premises. The Bill must be regarded as the Voluntary Schools Bill was regarded, as showing the bitter animus of the Government against School Boards, and he was justified in indulging in that suspicion by the frank avowal of the First Lord of the Treasury when the Education Bill was before the House last Session. The greatest possible discontent would be created by this proposal, because of its different effect in different localities. The London ratepayers in particular would call to account their representatives who sat on the other side of the House, and who had preserved a significant silence during this discussion. There would be the greatest dissatisfaction among the supporters of Board Schools when they found that, while Voluntary Schools had full consideration from the Government and were liberally dealt with, the popular, unsectarian Board Schools had flung to them the smallest possible amount the Government could give. [" Hear, hear !"]

*Mr. ALFRED BILLSON (Halifax) had tried to work out how the Bill would operate in a concrte case, and had taken his constituency of Halifax, and he would state what appeared to be the result. By the 97th Section of the present Act, if the 3d. rate did not bring in 7s. 6d. it had to be made up, and by the new proposal there was to be added 4d. per child to the 7s. 6d. for every penny of the rate above 3d. In Halifax the rate was 14d., and there would therefore be added eleven times fourpence to make up the normal figure. Three and eightpence added to 7s. 6d. made up 11s. 2d., and if the 3d. rate did not produce 11s. 2d., the Exchequer would pay the difference. Now in Halifax 11s. 2d. per child on 8,800 children brought in £4,900, and if the 3d. rate did not produce that, the Exchequer would make up the difference. It only brought in £4,200, so that if the calculation was right it would appear that Halifax would get about £700, which was not quite equal to a ½d. rate. There was a certain force in the remark of his hon. Friend that while voluntary subscribers were going to be relieved of all future subscriptions, for that was what it would do, ratepayers would get little or no relief, for the ratepayers in Halifax who now paid 14d. would still go on paying 13½d. This would not satisfy Halifax, and he could not but think there were many other constituencies who would feel they were not properly dealt with. He could not help thinking there was a great deal of force in what his hon. Friend had said, that the two Bills well illustrated the animus of the Government against Board Schools. In two villages, if the one had a School Board and the other had not, the village without a School Board would have all its education expenses found, and the ratepayers of the other village would still have to pay, and, naturally, the tendency all over the country would be to do without School Boards; and similarly, in neighbouring towns there would be the greatest discontent where the one had a School Board and the other had not. It would be seen in a few days how things would work out in other constituencies, and if the result was similar to that in Halifax the Bill would receive very little popular support.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said the figures just given showed how in some respects unjustly the proposal would work; but he passed from details to the general question involved in the Resolution. As he understood, it would not be in order for any Member to move to increase the amount hereafter, and this was the opportunity to make a protest against the inadequacy of the sum allocated. He shared the general disappointment at the inadequacy of the amount, and coupling this proposal with the amount given to Voluntary Schools it was perfectly evident the Government had made a mere pretence of redeeming their pledge. If that pledge had been redeemed in the spirit it was understood as given, Board Schools would receive a very much larger share of public money than was represented by the Resolution. Board Schools were under public control, and Boards were responsible to the ratepayers, who would not permit sectarian religious teaching, and so they were to be treated on a very different footing indeed from sectarian schools. The proposal would bear with particular harshness and injustice upon Wales, especially south Wales, where there were a large number of Board Schools, because, when the time came to work out the way in which Board Schools in Wales would receive money under the Act, it would be shown that Wales as a whole would have most unjust treatment. As a matter of fact, if the distribution were exactly equal in Wales and England, Wales would on the present basis receive much less than the Principality was entitled to, as shown by his hon. Friend the Member for Glamorgan, on the basis of population, and would still further suffer owing to the fact that so many of the schools in Wales were Board Schools. He refrained from expressing what was in his mind with regard to the utter meanness and shabbiness of this proposal, and the treatment of Board Schools in a year when the national revenue so largely exceeded expenditure, that the Government would have a balance of two millions to do what they liked with. To give a miserable sum of £110,000 to Board Schools while millions were being spent in warlike expenditure, and millions more would be asked for, was not only mean, but extremely short-sighted. The country would suffer in the future from the policy of starving education for the sake of militaryism. It was time a strong protest was made against this, and he was sure the common sense of the country would declare that Board Schools were being treated in a manner utterly unworthy of the House of Commons and the present financial position of the Exchequer.

SIR JOHN BAKER (Portsmouth) had listened with great attention to the proposal of the Government, and regretted extremely that it was a bitter disappointment to Members on either side and educationalists generally. Unquestionably the hope of liberality towards necessitous Board Schools, and the sympathy expressed for them, added to the support given to the Voluntary Schools Bill. The Government had lost a golden opportunity to recover the confidence of educationalists, and their ridiculously inadequate proposal would be received with contempt throughout the country. Large School Boards, including London, would have no interest in the Bill. In the large town he had the honour to represent there were no more denominational schools than there were 25 years since. The ratepayers had spent £400,000 on education, and were now paying 1s. in the pound rates for maintenance of schools, with a capital behind them of £300,000, which would have to be paid by present and succeeding ratepayers. Why should they not be considered when relief was being given from public resources to denominational schools? They had a much stronger claim to relief than many of the districts which would be granted relief under the Voluntary Schools Bill, and for the very reason that large communities, which were mainly composed of working people, were continually increasing the educational facilities in their midst. An increase of 2,000 or 3,000 in the population every year necessitated a heavier rate upon the community. The relief afforded under the Bill just passed did not affect such a community as he represented in the slightest degree, but left it in a worse position than it was in before. He trusted the Government would reconsider the main principles of the Measure and make a grant which would afford satisfaction to the supporters of the Board Schools. The Leader of the House had referred to the allegation that relief of rates in urban districts was a grant to the landowners and property owners. There was not a vestige of truth in that allegation. In urban districts the rates fell on the tenants. In the case of a few rack-rented tenements in respect of which weekly rents were paid, the landlord might impose on the tenants a slight additional rent, but in the large communities such practice prevailed, and as rates increased they fell wholly upon the tenants. A landlord would no more think of reducing the rents because there was an increase of rates than he would of raising them because there was a decrease of rates. The case was totally different to that under the Agricultural Rating Act. He trusted that the large centres of labouring population who were affected by the School Board rate so seriously would receive the same measure of relief as was granted under the Voluntary Schools Bill.

MR. JOHN BRIGG (York, W.R., Keighley) hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would give them some further information as to how he arrived at the 4d. scale. The position of School Boards in relation to one another was now very much more unsatisfactory than it had been for some time past, and therefore it was very necessary that everything should be made plain. He feared that there would be a strong tendency on the part of districts to lower their rateable value as much as they could in the hope that they might get the relief provided by the Bill.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) was surprised that the Government had not availed themselves of the opportunity of giving 5s. per head per child in average attendance at necessitous Board Schools. It was quite evident that the Government had an animus against School Boards in the matter of money. It was well known that relief was given to the Voluntary Schools because of the intolerable strain of the competition between the two sets of schools; indeed, it was admitted that it was not sufficient to give a grant to the Voluntary Schools, but that something must be done to break down the competition of the Board Schools. The Government, acting on the principle of having no sympathy with the Board Schools, to put it no higher than that, had resolved to appropriate only an additional £110,000 for the Board Schools as against £600,000 for the Voluntary Schools. It had been said that the relief of the Board Schools was of a different nature to that of the Voluntary Schools. He was amazed that the present Government should take up the position that the local ratepayer was not a person requiring relief. What did they do in 1888? They gave millions of money in relief of local rates, because they said the local ratepayer was overburdened. The ratepayer did not mind whether, say, 2s. relief was given for education, public health purposes, or what. The burden to a ratepayer was the amount of money he had to pay without reference to the particular object for which the money was paid. Were they to understand that relief of local rates in future was not to be determined according to the necessities and exigencies of the locality? If they were to adopt a principle of that kind in regard to education they might fairly say they would apply it in respect to the seven or ten millions of money given every year. It had been said that the cost of education in England had increased very much since 1870. So it had. It had been pointed out that in 1870 it was estimated that a 3d. rate would be sufficient to cover the cost of education. That was so; but since 1870 the whole tendency of feeling in England had been to increase the expenditure upon education. The Education Department had made increased demands not only upon Board Schools but upon Voluntary Schools, and thus increased the cost. The Vice President of the Council had spoken of the increase of the teachers' salaries in late years. That increase was due to the ordinary cause of supply and demand, and he was surprised the right hon. Gentleman did not admit that England, in regard to her teaching staff, stood in a most peculiar position. In any other calling there was an open market, but not so as regarded teachers. A limit was placed upon the output of teachers simply because it was pretended there was a lack of accommodation in the training colleges. The number of teachers was purposely restricted, and the consequence was that the teachers demanded high salaries, and often managers were obliged to have recourse to inferior teachers. He denied that the English School Boards were extravagant in their expenditure, and as to the taking of the Second Reading of the Bill of which this resolution was a preliminary, he maintained that there was no necessity to take the Measure hurriedly. In the case of the Voluntary Schools Bill it was necessary to get the associations, which were so material a part of the Measure, in working order before the financial year expired; but in this case School Boards were already in existence, and therefore there was no need to push the Bill forward with undue haste. It had been stated that the cost of education should be defrayed entirely from Imperial funds. That was an impracticable idea; it was an idea which was opposed to the interests of education, because in educational matters it was always well to keep up the interest of the parents and of the local ratepayers.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an addition to the grant payable to School Boards, under Section Ninety-seven of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, by increasing the sum of seven shillings and sixpence therein mentioned by fourpence for every complete penny by which the rate therein mentioned exceeds threepence; Provided that the said sum as so increased shall not exceed sixteen shillings and sixpence.

Resolution to be reported upon Thursday.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

Mr. J. Caldwell.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUNDS BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

QUARTER SESSIONS JURORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Read the Third time, and passed.

DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 29th April.

RAILWAY ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) moved the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. CALDWELL said that the Bill proposed a novel principle. At present the assessor, whose duty it was to decide between the railway companies and the local authorities as to the rateable value of railway property, was appointed by Government; but his salary was paid by the railway companies, and now, under this Bill, he was to be given a superannuation allowance, also payable by the railway companies. These assessors had most responsible duties to discharge, and they ought to hold the balance perfectly equal. There was not much danger in the assessors receiving their salaries from the railway companies, because the amount was fixed by the Secretary for Scotland. But the superannuation allowance was a different matter. The Treasury were not concerned, and the only interest which could influence the Secretary for Scotland in fixing the superannuation allowance was the railway companies' interest. The companies were interested in securing the lowest possible valuation of their property, and that consideration might weigh with the assessors, who knew that the amount of their superannuation allowances depended on the goodwill of the companies. It was a bad principle that such a responsible official should be dependent on the action of one of the parties to the cases which he had to decide.

*The LORD ADVOCATE said the Bill was a very short and simple one. It was simply to provide for the giving of a retiring allowance, which had hitherto been impossible, to the assessor of railways and canals in Scotland, and the other officers under him. There was really nothing in the considerations which had been urged by the hon. Member who had just addressed the House. He began by contradicting himself, because his first sentence was that this was a novel departure in principle, and he went on to say what was true, that it was not a novel departure in principle—[*laughter*]—because it was merely carrying out, so far as superannuation was concerned, exactly what had been already fixed so far as the salary was concerned.

Mr. CALDWELL said he had merely said that it was a departure from the general principle that applied to all these cases.

*The LORD ADVOCATE said it was, however, a small matter. [*Opposition cheers.*] He agreed it was a small matter whether the hon. Member contradicted himself or not. [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition cries of* "Oh!" and Mr. Caldwell: "I appeal!"] Continuing, the right hon. Gentleman said the hon. Member had spoken as if the railway assessor had to adjudicate between the railway company and the parish through which the railway passed. He had to do nothing of the sort. The ordinary assessor had nothing to do with railways and canals. So far as they were concerned, there was one general officer appointed for the whole of Scotland, who valued the whole of the railways and canals all over Scotland, and after certain statutory deductions, and having brought out the annual value, he divided the annual value by the total mileage of the railway, and he gave to each parish its proper proportion of the total. A mere statement of the case would show that there was no question of Party and Party. The assessor was valuing the whole railway system, and, therefore, unless he was a perfect Machiavelli, he could scarcely get into his head the extraordinarily complicated scheme that, in order to favour or disfavour the parish of A, he should in some way or other cook the valuation of the whole railway system throughout the kingdom. But, assuming there were Party and Party, what influence upon the assessor had the question of his having a superannuation allowance? Such an allowance was only given to a man who was going—["hear, hear!"]—and it was generally the new king one made friends with and not the old one. The hon. Member spoke as if the great point for the assessor was to keep on good terms with the railway companies in order that his superannuation allowance might be fixed in a way suitable to himself. The Bill followed the well-known scheme of the allowances which were granted in all Departments of the Government by the Treasury. The hon. Member spoke as if the railway companies had the fixing of this man's salary, but they had nothing of the sort. It was fixed by the Treasury. There was just the same check upon the salary as there always was the check of one department over another. The appointment was by the Secretary for Scotland, but the salary was fixed by the Treasury, and the superannuation allowance was necessarily upon the amount of the salary, and, accordingly, was not really in the purview of the railway companies at all. ["Hear, hear!"] All the Valuation Act said was that the railway companies should contribute to the Treasury an equal sum as the Treasury paid out to this gentleman.

MR. J. COLVILLE (Lanarkshire, N.E.) said it was obvious that the appointment was one which should not depend for salary upon one of the parties interested.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not in question upon this Bill, which is only a superannuation Bill. There is no question as to who shall pay the salary or who shall appoint.

MR. COLVILLE merely wished to point out that in dealing with the superannuation allowance, regard should be had that appointment in this case was of such a vague nature, and that payment was not for the Crown, but for one of the parties most directly affected by the assessment.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

On the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill,

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS said the Bill proposed to pay £200 per annum to the Archdeacon of Cornwall, and that sum was not to be subscribed by the Members of the Church in that diocese, but was to come out of the common fund of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, instead of coming out of the Truro Chapter endowment. The result would be that the canonry would be better off by £200 a year, and the common fund of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would be £200 worse off than it was at present. He pointed out that one of the purposes of the common fund of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was the augmentation of small livings, and that this sum of money might be usefully applied in that way. Inasmuch, however, as the Bill did not provide for any augmentation of the funds devoted to the national Church, and only involved a small rearrangement of the funds, he did not think it necessary to oppose it.

Read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

FOREIGN PRISON MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned till Thursday.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

On the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said there were 15 or 16 Superannuation Bills at present before the House.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked for some explanation of the provisions of the Bill.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) said that a Memorandum in regard to the Bill had been already circulated. The Bill would not increase the charges on the revenues of India, but tended to the contrary result. It applied to certain officials who belonged to the old East India Company, and who were under a special Superannuation Act passed in the reign of George III., the terms of which for lengthened services were more liberal than those of the present Superannuation Act. There had been great difficulty in working the two superannuation funds, and it was thought right to try and amend the terms of the East India Company's Act. The result would be that the few gentlemen who were concerned would be able to retire at a somewhat earlier period at a less pension.

Read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION BILL.

On the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill,

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) said it had been found necessary to provide larger accommodation for the Patent Office, and this Bill was to enable the land to be taken under the ordinary law in the ordinary way.

Dr. TANNER thought the House should deal with these matters in an economical spirit, and he therefore asked how much land was to be purchased, and at what price?

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) said the object of the Bill was to acquire only the freehold interest in two houses for the purposes of the extension. The sum to be paid would certainly not exceed £9,000.

Read a Second time.

On the Question, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection,"

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) asked why the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee?

*Mr. SPEAKER said it was referred to a Select Committee, in accordance with the invariable practice of the House where private Bill powers were sought by a public Bill.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL asked if the right hon. Gentleman would let an Irishman serve on the Committee?

*Mr. SPEAKER said that Motion was not one for the nomination, but for the appointment of the Committee. The nomination would be subsequently moved.

Dr. TANNER asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give an explanation of how the money was to be paid?

*Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. Member was not in order in asking that question.

Bill committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented Three clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE [ADVANCES].

Considered in Committee.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding in the whole £500,000, as may be required for the purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of a Site for Public Offices in or near Whitehall, and for other purposes connected therewith, and to authorise the Treasury, for the purpose of providing for the issue and repayment of such sums, to borrow money by means of terminable annuities for a period not exceeding fifty years, such annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund."

MR. J. P. FARRELL protested against the voting of this sum of money as absolutely unnecessary. Ireland was interested in this sum, at least, to the extent of 1-11th, and he should divide the Committee against the Resolution in order to emphasise their protest. He moved to leave out "£500,000," in order to insert instead thereof "£455,000."

DR. TANNER said that, instead of the Committee committing itself to the grant of this money, hon. Members ought really to raise the question as to the why and wherefore of its expenditure. He wished to know what extra offices were required, what was the price to be paid for the land, and what offices were to be erected upon it?

Question put, "That '£500,000' stand part of the Question."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 163; Noes, 12.—(Division List, No. 162.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding in the whole £500,000, as may be required for the purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of a site for public offices in or near Whitehall, and for other purposes connected therewith, and to authorise the Treasury, for the purpose of providing for the issue and repayment of such sums, to borrow money by means of terminable annuities for a period not exceeding fifty years, such annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund.

Resolution to be Reported upon Thursday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

LONDON WATER COMPANIES AMALGAMATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston), who rose to move the Second Reading of this Bill, said that it was based on the recommendations of a Select Committee which sat three or four years ago. Before the hon. Member had proceeded further,

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present—

The House was Adjourned at Half after Ten of the Clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 6th April 1897.

EARL OF KINGSTON.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Henry Edwyn King-Tenison, Earl of Kingston, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

QUARTER SESSIONS JURORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read 1^a; and to be printed.—[No. 47.]

CONVEYANCING BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to simplify the title to and the transfer of land—Was presented by the Lord Davey; Read 1^a; and to be printed.—[No. 46.]

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

*The Earl of ERNE asked the Postmaster General whether his attention had been called to the strong desire expressed by the inhabitants of the town of Enniskillen and the adjoining counties for an improvement in the day mail service from Dublin; and whether he was now in a position to state whether any provision could be made for the acceleration of the mails between Dundalk and Enniskillen? The noble Earl said a similar question to this was asked on the 4th March by Lord Belmore. Since then the revised time table consequent on the acceleration of mails to the North of Ireland had been issued, and no mention had been made of a train from Dundalk to Enniskillen. The matter was entered into at some length by Lord Belmore, and therefore he himself would not trouble the House with many remarks. But this was a matter which not only affected Enniskillen, but the Counties of Fermanagh Monaghan, and parts of Tyrone, Cavan, Leitrim, and Donegal. This large district had been shut out from the benefit of the acceleration of fourteen or fifteen years ago, and if again left out in the cold, its position would be greatly worsened, as far as passengers were concerned, because they would have to wait at Dundalk for an hour and a half instead of about an hour as formerly.

*The POSTMASTER GENERAL (The Duke of Norfolk): My attention has been called to the strong desire expressed by the inhabitants of Enniskillen and the adjoining district for an improvement in the day mail service from Dublin, and I have instructed the Secretary in Dublin to communicate with the railway company, in the hope that they may see their way to such alterations as would bring about the improvement desired, the case not being one in which the Post Office would be justified in incurring the cost of an additional train. I have not yet been made acquainted with the decision of the Company. I trust those interested in the localities or districts concerned will bring all the pressure they can to bear on the railway company to give what I entirely agree is a necessary boon in that part of Ireland. But unfortunately, while further investigation has shown that we were right, as we inferred from the beginning, the advantages to be gained would not be commensurate with the cost which would be incurred. The Post Office has done what it could, and it is to be hoped those in the localities concerned will endeavour to induce the railway company to grant this concession.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Viscount GALWAY said he was aware that the arrangements for the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee were not yet complete, but it was reported that the auxiliary forces were to take part in celebrating that auspicious day, the 22nd of

June, and he hoped that old Constitutional force, the Yeomanry Cavalry, which formed part of our auxiliary forces, would not be left out, but would take their fair share in the celebrations. He begged to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Yeomanry Cavalry would take part in the celebrations of the 22nd of June in London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE): The arrangements are not finally settled, but I am able to tell my noble Friend that it is in contemplation that the Yeomanry shall be represented. ["Hear, hear!"]

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD HALSBURY): I wish before we adjourn, to refer to something I saw in *The Times* to-day. I should have thought that the gentleman who wrote the letter would have been more familiar with the book from which I quoted than to attribute to me opinions and language which I read from "May's Practice of Parliament." The particular phrases and language which I quoted are taken *verbatim et literatim* from that work. I stated at the time that the privilege was claimed by the House of Commons in 1678, and that, rightly or wrongly, the privilege could be claimed. I expressed no opinion myself whether the privilege was right.

House Adjourned at Twenty Minutes before Five o'Clock, to Thursday next, Half-past Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 6th April 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): To call attention to the excessive duration of Speeches in the House of Commons; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 4th May.*]

Viscount Galway.

CROWN LANDS (WALES).

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Boroughs): To call attention to the administration of Crown Lands and the appropriation of Common Lands in Wales; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 4th May.*]

QUESTIONS.

ALBANY AND KING GEORGE'S SOUND GARRISON.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it has been recently brought to his knowledge that statements have been made affecting the present condition of the garrison in the neighbourhood of Albany and King George's Sound; and whether steps can be taken to cause inquiry to be made into the state of this important coaling station?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I am very glad to say that, in reply to a telegram dispatched on April 3, the Governor of West Australia telegraphs that nothing unusual has happened, and that the condition of the garrison is efficient.

BREWING MATERIALS.

MR. ARTHUR BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether every brewer has at present to fill in a return, giving, without any exception, the materials that he uses in the production or manufacture of beer; and whether the particulars supplied by the brewers to the Excise officials in this manner would include the case of minute quantities of chemicals used as hop substitutes or hop supplements?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The return to which the hon. Member refers is a return of the materials on which the Beer Duty charge is based. It does not show the quantities either of hops or of hop substitutes which the brewer may use.

HAMPSTEAD UNION WORKHOUSE.

Mr. J. C. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of a recent meeting of the Hampstead Board of Guardians, at which a Guardian called the attention of the Board to the enormous waste of bread in the workhouse; whether this arises from the Regulations of the Local Government Board, which prescribe the same allowances to every inmate whether they desire them or not: whether the same Guardian was justified in saying that in another workhouse, by serving out only the bread which was really required, a ton of bread per month was saved; and whether, if this be so, the Local Government Board will consider the propriety of amending their Orders in the interests of economy?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): My attention had not been drawn to the matter prior to the notice of the Question. I have made inquiry, and am informed that the amount of waste which is represented by the bread which is not consumed is about three or four pounds a day. The dietary table in force in the parish provides for a certain quantity of bread being served out for each inmate, and if this quantity should be found to be in excess of what is required, it could, of course, be reduced; and I shall be happy to consider any representations which I may receive from the Guardians on the subject. With regard to the statement of an individual Guardian as to the saving of bread in another workhouse, I have no such information as would lead me to suppose that there has been any such saving as that suggested.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

General Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what arrangements it is proposed to make in order that the Volunteers outside of the London district may be present and adequately represented in the ceremony of the celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee in the 60th year of her reign; and what arrangements will be made for individual Volunteer officers from all parts of the kingdom not present with troops being able to take part in the ceremony?

Mr. BRODRICK: Care will be taken that the Volunteers shall be fairly represented in the ceremony. ["Hear, hear!"] As regards Volunteers who do not take part in the ceremony, I am afraid they will only be in the same position as the rest of Her Majesty's subjects.

Sir H. HAVELOCK-ALLAN said that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the latter portion of his Question with regard to the Volunteer officers.

Mr. BRODRICK: I am afraid that the Volunteer officers will have to share the lot of the general body of Volunteers in this matter.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it is proposed to make any provision for officers of the Navy and Army now serving on full pay in this country to enable them to witness the procession on the occasion of the celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. A. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have caused an inquiry to be sent to the Naval and Military authorities requesting them to furnish me with the numbers of places likely to be required for the purpose referred to in my hon. and gallant Friend's Question. On receiving a reply, I will endeavour to make arrangements for officers of the Navy and Army similar to those which are in contemplation for Members of the Civil Services.

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE).

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury with reference to the Returns of Imperial Revenue and Revenue and Expenditure, which appears on the Paper to-day, whether it will be possible to have these Returns prepared so that they might be in the hands of Members of the House during the early stages of the Debates on the Budget, instead of being kept back, as last year, until after Parliament had separated?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): These

Returns cannot be prepared until the Revenue Departments have got in their final accounts of all the various heads of Revenue in detail, and some little time must elapse before such information is available. But there shall be no unnecessary delay, and though no promise can be given that the Returns will be issued by the time of the Budget Debate, they shall be presented without fail in the course of the Session.

FATAL ACCIDENTS INQUIRY (SCOTLAND) ACT.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) if juries under the Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act, 1895, are expressly precluded from making presentment, such as are frequently made by juries in coroners' inquests in England, relative to circumstances, or the conduct of persons, brought to light during the inquiries; if not, by whom the making of such presentments has been prohibited; and (2) whether, in view of the general dissatisfaction with the expense of empannelling juries merely to record the time, place, and cause or causes of death, he will consider how the usage in Scotland can be conformed to that in England?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): In reply to the first part of the Question, there is nothing to preclude a jury summoned under the Act referred to from making any statement which could properly be made in returning a verdict under the Act. In reply to the second part of the Question, I am not aware of any general dissatisfaction; and I am not at present inclined to consider that the practice in Scotland requires alteration.

LIGHTHOUSES AND FOG HORNS (SCOTLAND).

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he receives an annual Report by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, stating what progress is being made with the improvement of existing lights and the erection of new lighthouses and fog horns on the coasts of Scotland; and, if so, whether it can be published in addition to the Report of Inspection of Harbour and Local Lights?

Secretary to the Treasury.

MR. HANBURY (on behalf of Mr. RITCHIE): No Report in the form suggested in the Question is made to the Board of Trade by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses. The Commissioners have to obtain the sanction of the Board of Trade to all expenditure on new works connected with lighthouses, and a statement of the sums actually expended on such works will be found in the Civil Service Appropriation Accounts (Mercantile Marine Fund—Grant in Aid) which are annually presented to Parliament.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he is aware that the system of withdrawal by telegraph has been so appreciated by depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank that the number of withdrawals by this means has risen from 44,163 in 1894 to 102,553 in 1896; (2) whether in order to meet the needs of those depositors who are not prepared to pay the cost of telegrams when requiring their money speedily, he will consider the advisability of enabling such depositors to withdraw sums up to £2 on demand, under some such system of Savings Bank Postal Orders as that which has recently been submitted to the Government by a retired officer of the Department, who has proposed that the Post Office Savings Bank should be empowered to issue to its depositors Savings Bank Postal Orders in books of eight at a charge of 1s. commission, or 1½d. each order; (3) whether he is aware that this system would not affect bankers' interests, inasmuch as the proposed orders would be of a fixed value, viz., of 10s., 15s., £1, or £2, and would not admit of the transfer of money, being payable to the depositor only on production of the deposit book at any Savings Bank Post Office; and (4) whether he is aware that the estimated profits accruing from the adoption of this system would materially augment the Post Office Savings Bank revenue, and render a reduction in the rate of interest unnecessary?

MR. HANBURY: The withdrawals by telegraph in 1894 were 49,006, or about 5,000 more than stated in the first Question. So far as the Post Office can judge, three-quarters of these are by the working classes. The answer to the second Question is, No. It is difficult to say what would or would not affect bankers' interests. They sometimes contend that the Post Office is trenching on their functions already. It is not at all clear whether these Orders would admit of a transfer of money to a third person, just as the ordinary withdrawal warrant does now. If they did not, they might often cause much inconvenience, and, indeed, prove useless. The "estimated profits" are those estimated by the hon. Member. The Post Office estimates a loss. The decrease in the Telegraph and Postal revenue would be considerable, and the commission of 1½d. on each Order would not meet the additional working expenses. The Post Office Savings Bank was established in order to encourage thrift, and the Government has no intention of converting it into a banking institution.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he is aware that for the year ending the 31st December 1896, the Post Office Savings Bank contributed the sum of £66,040 to the Post Office Revenue, that sum being charged for postage in the expenses of management; (2) whether he is aware that under the new rule for withdrawal by telegraph, depositors contribute in a rapidly increasing ratio to the telegraph revenue, the amounts so contributed being £2,900 for 1894, £4,700 for 1895, and £6,200 for 1896; (3) whether he will take these facts into consideration when determining the question of a possible reduction in the rate of interest; (4) whether he is aware that on the 31st December 1895 there were 108,033 accounts in the Post Office Savings Bank with balances over £150, and that the amount standing to the credit of these accounts was as much as £21,620,115; and (5) whether, in view of the fact that a reduction in the rate of interest from 2½ to 2 per cent. on this amount will produce upwards of £108,000, and affect only 108,033 accounts, he will, in the event of a reduction in the rate of interest becoming imperative, consider the advisability of confining such reduction to accounts showing balances in excess of £150?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: The figures given in the 1st, 2nd, and 4th paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question are correct, and were furnished to him by the Postmaster General. But it must be remembered that the sums paid out of Savings Bank funds into the postal and telegraph revenue represent practically the cost of work done, and not profit to the Exchequer. I do not, therefore, see that the question of the rate of interest is so much affected by them as the hon. Member suggests. I have already stated that the reduction of the interest on deposits above a certain amount was under my consideration, but I doubt whether £150 would be a practical limit for that purpose.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, having regard to the fact that as much as £66,040 was charged for postage in the expenses of management of the Post Office Savings Bank for the year ended 31st December 1896, he will state why he objects to say on what basis the charge for postage is estimated; whether it is the fact that a depositor's book passing through the post is charged a penny, and whether the ordinary acknowledgment sent to the depositor in the case of money paid in is also charged a penny; whether it is practicable to treat such acknowledgments as receipted invoices at the halfpenny rate; and whether he will state what would be the saving in postage if such acknowledgments were so treated?

Mr. HANBURY: I do not know to what objection the hon. Member refers. The charge on depositors' books going to or from the head office is calculated according to weight—at a special rate—and works out at almost exactly 1d. It is not the fact that the charge for either acknowledgments of depositors or warrants and advices for withdrawal is calculated at 1d. They are charged at ½d., and the proposed calculation is therefore unnecessary.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether, having regard to the fact that the Atlantic seaboard of the island of Lewis is not included in the North Sea Convention, he will state whether it has been held desirable to consult the States signatories of that Convention before making a bye-law to render beam and other trawling illegal within 13 miles of the Atlantic seaboard of the island of Lewis; and (2), if it is not held desirable to consult the States signatories of the Convention, will he state what prevents the making of the proposed bye-law?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The States signatories to the North Sea Fisheries Convention have not been consulted with reference to the making of a bye-law to render beam and other trawling illegal within 13 miles of the Atlantic seaboard of the island of Lewis. The second paragraph of the Question is, I think, rather a matter that concerns the Scottish Office.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) asked whether the signatories to the North Sea Convention had been consulted with regard to the 13 mile limit on the other coasts of Scotland?

MR. CURZON: That is a Question not connected with that which the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty has just put, and I shall be glad if the hon. Gentleman will give notice of it.

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT (ELECTRIC LIGHTING).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will state how much per unit is paid for electric current for the lighting of the Houses of Parliament; if he is aware that the cost of producing electric current varies from 1½d. to 2d. per unit; and whether he will consider the advisability of providing the necessary installation, seeing that there is ample space in the engine and boiler rooms of the House for such an installation?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The price paid under contract for a fixed period is sixpence per unit. It was found impossible to secure a lower price, seeing that the company specially provided plant for the building, including an alternative supply. There is no suitable space in the Houses of Parliament for a complete installation for the production of electric light; and it would be necessary to provide a site, as well as special buildings and machinery, at a great cost. This matter has received very careful consideration, and it has not been thought

desirable to embark upon so large an expenditure as would have to be incurred if the suggestion of the hon. Member were to be carried out.

ALDERSHOT MANŒUVRES (ROYAL MARINES).

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) whether the compensation allowance of 4d. per day, as recently conceded to the troops which took part in the last Aldershot manœuvres, as compensation for extra wear and tear of clothing, occasioned by the bad weather, will be made to the Royal Marines, who also took part in the same manœuvres; and (2) whether, in consideration of the amount of route marching and manœuvring now imposed on the corps, the same issue of boots as now received by the Army will for the future be granted?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second Question, the question of the issue of boots to the Royal Marines has been carefully considered, and it is not intended to alter the present regulations.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he intends to publish the evidence taken by Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, in accordance with the definite promise to do so made by his predecessor in this House on 17th May 1895?

MR. HANBURY: Yes, Sir.

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if, in accordance with the Inter-Departmental Report, an auxiliary postman will be a person whose total period of duty does not exceed three hours daily, what provision will be made for rural auxiliaries in Ireland who perform four and four and a half hours' duty daily; whether four hours' rural men in Ireland, who discharge their duties under adverse conditions, will have the benefits accorded to five hours' men employed in towns and cities; and, can the Department see their way to give men doing four hours' duty an extra hour's employment to bring them within the benefit of sick pay, boot money, and the prescribed holiday?

Mr. HANBURY: It is the arrangement under the recommendation of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee that in future an auxiliary postman will be a person whose total period of duty does not exceed three hours daily; but of course this change will be introduced gradually as opportunity offers, and will not necessitate the discharge of existing rural auxiliaries in Ireland or elsewhere who perform a longer period of duty daily. It is not understood what is meant by the reference to four hours' rural men in Ireland who discharge their duties under adverse conditions. The rural postmen in Ireland are paid on the same principle as those in Great Britain, and will share with them the benefits of the new scheme. But they cannot be accorded the privileges designed for the five hours' men, nor would it be possible to give them an extra hour's work in order to qualify them for those privileges.

Mr. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, with reference to the rule laid down that postal and telegraphic officials can only complain to the postal authorities by way of memorial, in order to have their complaint considered, whether his attention has been called to the indignation meeting held by officials in Dublin last Saturday, about the Report of the Tweedmouth Committee; and whether he will state why postal and telegraphic officials are to be debarred the ordinary right of organisation, and of making representations to the Postmaster General by way of public meeting and resolutions, now open to all trades unionists and officials who have reason to make complaint to their employers?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has seen in the newspapers reports of a meeting held by officers of the Departments in Dublin on the subject of the Report of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee, but his attention has not so far been directed to the matter officially. It is not the fact that postal and telegraph officials are debarred the ordinary rights of organisation, which has been expressly conceded to them, and of which they fully avail themselves. But the Postmaster General has always required that if as the result of their meetings or deliberation they should desire to approach him on any subject, they should do so by memorial through their superior officers. In the interests of the Service he considers it desirable to maintain the rule.

Mr. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, under the Departmental Report on Post Office Establishments, the supervisors of the upper section employed in the London Postal Service Department will participate in the prospective promotions to assistant superintendentship?

Mr. HANBURY: One of the recommendations of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee is that the Supervisors of the upper section in the London Postal Service, who are six in number, should retain their present scale; but that no new appointment shall be made to this class. Whatever prospects in the past these officers had to promotion have not been affected by the Report; but it is only right to add that as a matter of fact it has not been the practice to promote them to the office of Assistant Superintendents.

CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN.

Mr. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can explain the cause of the delays existing at the Custom House in Dublin in adjudicating on documents lodged for the purpose of being adjudicated upon pursuant to Section 12 of The Stamp Act, 1891; and whether such documents are adjudicated upon in Dublin or are sent to London for that purpose?

Mr. HANBURY: The Board of Inland Revenue inform me that no unreasonable delay takes place except where the parties presenting the documents do not furnish the information which is necessary to enable the proper duty to be adjudicated. If the right hon. Member will mention to me any particular case of delay I will cause further inquiry to be made. The documents are adjudicated upon in Dublin, and only in exceptional cases is a reference to London required.

PAROCHIAL RATES (LIVERPOOL).

Mr. J. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the demand notes for parochial rates in the parish of Liverpool contain the item, "Voluntary Rate, 189— ———, at 1d. in the £1. By order of the General Vestry, 'for Church and other purposes;'" and whether he will take steps to secure the omission of such item in future?

Mr. CHAPLIN: I have communicated with the churchwardens and overseers, and in reply they have directed attention to the fact that the words "Voluntary Rate, 1896" is printed in a different colour to the remainder of the note, and is in conspicuous type. Notwithstanding this, I am of opinion that it is very undesirable that any item in respect of a voluntary rate should be included in a demand note for rates which are legally recoverable, and I have so informed the churchwardens and overseers. [*Opposition cheers.*]

BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA (HEALTH).

Colonel WYNDHAM MURRAY (Bath): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of carrying out the recommendation of the Committee of the Royal College of Physicians contained in their Report forwarded to the Secretary of State for India on the 29th March, that Medical Officers of the Army should give elementary reading room lectures on the preservation of health to young soldiers; and whether these lectures could especially be given before or during their voyage to India?

Mr. BRODRICK: The recommendation that Medical Officers of the Army should give lectures to young soldiers on the preservation of their health is one to which great importance is attached, and the question of the time and manner in which such advice can be given is under consideration.

BURIAL GROUND (DEBENHAM, SUFFOLK).

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, more than a year ago, the Parish Council of Debenham, Suffolk, purchased additional land for burial accommodation, obtained the consent of the parish meeting and of the East Suffolk County Council to borrow £400 for the purpose, and received the necessary sanction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, after the receipt of a favourable report following upon inquiry by a medical officer from that Department; whether, in view of those facts, it is still his intention to direct a local inquiry to be held by an inspector of the Local Government Board; and upon whom the cost of the proposed inquiry will fall?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Local Government Board have no information as to the date of the purchase of the land referred to. The sanction of the County Council to the borrowing has been given, subject to the loan being sanctioned by the Board, and upon the particulars which have been furnished in connection with the application for their consent, the Board consider that a public local inquiry should be held in the matter by one of their inspectors. In the ordinary course the cost of the inquiry will be borne by the Parish Council. With regard to the visits of two inspectors from two Departments to the same place, I am in communication with the Home Office—on the subject of these inquiries generally—and I should be very glad if it is found that the inquiry by the Local Government Board Inspector would render unnecessary inspection by the other Departments.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether action by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland is usually taken upon the advice of their official executive council; (2) whether the representations made to the Board on behalf of the workmistresses in Irish national schools was or has been referred to this body, and was it for their proposals in relation thereto the Board was waiting before giving a reply to the representations; (3) can he state the names of these Gentlemen; and (4) are their salaries on the Irish Estimates; if so, under what head?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The action of the Commissioners is entirely independent, and is taken on the merits of the cases that come before them. The representations made on behalf of the workmistresses from time to time have been considered by the Board. My right hon. Friend has already stated that certain proposals in relation to the remuneration of the workmistresses were made by the Board to the Irish Government, but that the Treasury, having given these representations their best consideration, were unable to sanction the proposals of the Commissioners. I have no information as to the third paragraph, and as regards the fourth paragraph the hon. Member will observe on reference to the Estimates that the only paid Member of the Board whose salary is on the Estimates is the Resident Commissioner.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that in many poor districts in Ireland workmistresses in Irish national schools have to supply out of their slender earnings most of the materials upon working on which their young pupils are trained; (2) whether at examinations the children from fourth to sixth class have to exhibit articles worked by them at home for the examination of the inspector; (3) whether in the poor districts the workmistresses have usually to purchase material so that their pupils may be qualified for examination; and (4) will these matters be inquired into with a view to relieving the workmistresses of the burden?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The Commissioners of National Education are not aware that the fact is as alleged in the first paragraph. No such obligation exists as is suggested in the second paragraph. With regard to the third and fourth paragraphs, if the hon. Member will supply me with particulars of any case in which it is reported that a workmistress is required to purchase materials, the matter will be inquired into, and steps taken to discontinue the practice.

LAND COMMISSION.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution adopted by the Midleton (County Cork) Board of Guardians on the 27th ultimo, protesting against the action taken by certain receivers over properties in the Counties of Cork and Waterford (whose names are mentioned in the resolution), in endeavouring to frustrate the Land Act by suing for old arrears, by taking up mortgages (these receivers being agents in London lending companies), and thus obtaning possession of these properties, and by purchasing arrears and then collecting them by threatening eviction; and whether he will take steps to bring these practices to the notice of the Judges of the Land Court?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The hon. Member has sent me a copy of the resolution in question, and I have referred it to the Land Judge. I may observe, however, that a receiver cannot sue for any rents or arrears except by leave of the Land Judge, whose officer he is, and to whom he is responsible for the due discharge of his duties, and also that the Land Judge has no power to dispose of arrears to any person other than the purchaser of the land. This resolution contains several serious charges of misconduct against certain receivers. If any of these be well-founded, any of the parties interested can, on application to the Land Judge, get full redress, but the Executive have no power in the matter.

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state for what reason the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners in fair-rent cases are not supplied to the solicitors appearing on the record for the parties; and whether, considering that the time for giving notice of appeal is limited, and for other reasons, he will consider the desirability of having some arrangements made, whether by insertion in the papers or by printed forms, whereby the solicitors for the parties shall be furnished with this information as soon as possible after the decisions have been given?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, when announced, are communicated at once to the tenants, who are notified of the amount at which their rents are fixed. The Commissioners consider that it is better that the tenant should be so informed direct instead of through his solicitor. Some years ago, when the solicitor, and not the tenant, was notified, there was considerable complaint on behalf of the tenants of the delay in communicating the notification to them. The decisions in fair-rent cases, as a rule, appear in the local newspapers, but the Land Commission cannot undertake to communicate their decisions to the Press. It is understood that the Deputy Registrars frequently, at the request of the solicitors engaged who are unable to attend at the announcement of the decisions, notify the result to them, but the Commissioners do not propose to issue any direction on the subject.

MR. McCARTAN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that no notification whatever is given of the time the decisions are to be given?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I believe no notification is given of the time the decision will be given, but the moment it is given it is communicated to the parties.

MR. J. HAMMOND (Carlow): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now state when it is expected the Land Commissioners will visit Carlow for the purpose of disposing of cases listed for hearing in the Land Court?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: A list of cases for hearing at Carlow will shortly be issued by the Commissioners, but they have not yet been able to fix the exact date on which the hearing will be commenced.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that notices under the 25th Section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, fixing the reductions to be allowed on the annuities payable to the Land Commissioners, have been issued to a number of purchasers; and how this can be legally done, in view of the fact that the rules under which these reductions were to be estimated have not been settled by the Treasury?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The notices referred to in the Question have reference only to annuities in respect of which ten years or more had, on the 1st of November, 1896, elapsed since the annuity began. In such cases the amount of the advance which has been repaid by means of the accumulation of that portion of the purchased annuity which represents repayment of capital is properly ascertained under the tables prescribed by the Treasury, which were in force prior to the passing of the Act of 1896.

REPLY LETTER CARDS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been directed to the resolutions concerning the reply letter card, which were unanimously passed at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire, held in London last June, in regard to the difficulties correspondents experience in prepaying closed replies to letters sent to foreign countries, and especially the British colonies and dependencies (a facility which exists for open postcards and telegrams), when the Congress recommended the adoption of the reply letter card (used by France and Ceylon for inland correspondence), and to the extension of its use to international communication in the same way as the open reply postcard, and that, at the Postal Union Congress to be held at Washington, the British Postmaster General be requested to take steps for the extension of the reply letter card to international postage as an efficient substitute for the oft-proposed international postage stamp; and whether, in presence of this unanimous expression of opinion of the British trading world, the Postmaster General would direct the British Postal delegates to support the adoption of the international reply letter card project at the coming Congress?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General's attention has been directed to the resolution passed at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire held in London last June in favour of reply letter cards for the use of persons wishing to prepay replies to letters of inquiry addressed to places abroad. In order to ascertain whether there was any effective demand for this facility, a circular was addressed to the Chambers of Commerce in this country in 1893. To this circular many of the Chambers sent no reply whatever, and the majority of those which did answer expressed the opinion that no real inconvenience existed from the absence of facilities for prepaying replies to letters posted in this country. The difficulty in arranging for a reply letter arises from the different currencies of different countries. For instance, while only 96 2½d. stamps can be bought in this country for a sovereign, 100 can be bought for its equivalent of 25f. in France, and the difference in other countries is even greater. It is obvious that in any system of reply letter cards, the desire would be for the cards to be purchased in the country where they could be purchased most cheaply, and such a result would under existing arrangements be almost always adverse to the interests of this country. The question of a means of prepayment of international reply postage will, however, be brought forward at the Postal Congress about to be held at Washington. The British delegates will, of course, take part in the discussion, and the Postmaster General will be glad if it be found possible to devise some satisfactory arrangement for the purpose, though he feels bound to say that he is not sanguine on the subject.

INDIAN FAMINE.

Mr. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the total amount of subscriptions received and remitted to India up to the end of March, for the relief of the people suffering from famine, by the United Kingdom, the British Colonies, and the Russian dominions, for the money and grain contributions from which the thanks of Her Majesty's Government were recently conveyed to the Government of the Czar?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): In reply to a telegram asking for information as to the sums already transmitted, the Government of India telegraphed on the 3rd inst. the following statement:—

> "Total subscriptions Indian Famine Fund as follows:—Mansion House, £361,850; remainder of United Kingdom, £183,400; British colonies, £37,543, of which Canada £25,000; India, £79,731; other parts of the world, £4,732; grand total, £667,256."

[*Cheers.*] They add that no contribution in money has as yet been received from Russia; what may have been received in kind I am at present unable to say; but Her Majesty's Government, having learned that gifts of grain were on their way from Russia, and that the Russian Government had given special facilities for their transport, lost no time in causing their thanks to be conveyed to that Government for their sympathetic action. [*Cheers.*] It will be observed that the sums of money received by the Government of India up to the 3rd inst. were considerably less than the amount which is known to have been subscribed or promised, and which cannot in all be less than £787,500.

MULLINGAR UNION.

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at the sworn Inquiry held last year by the medical inspector of the Local Government Board into the irregularities in the contract for medicines in Mullingar Union, it was proven that the clerk of the Union issued one set of advertisements in the local papers and inserted advertisements with different conditions in the Dublin papers, which had the effect of shutting out the competition of Dublin houses, and that the clerk of the Union stated publicly after the Inquiry at the Board of Guardians that he had received no censure from the Local Government Board; whether the same irregularities have taken place again this year; and, if he can state what action the Local Government Board intend to take towards the clerk of the Union?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The advertisements in the local papers set forth the conditions fully, whereas the advertisements in the Dublin papers, in order to save expense, only mentioned the fact that tenders would be considered on a particular day, and that forms could be had on application. These forms contained the conditions. This appears to have been the method adopted for many years previously. The clerk of the Union states that the advertisements for this year's contracts are in the same form both in the Dublin and local papers. No further action against the clerk of the Union is called for.

LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY (DEATH OF A FIREMAN).

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any representative of the Board of Trade was present at the inquest held by the Cheshire coroner on Richard Carter, a fireman on the London and North Western Railway, who was killed by his head coming in contact with a bridge; whether any inquiry has been or will be held by an inspector or sub-inspector of the Board; whether representations have been made to the Board of Trade on any previous occasion as to the danger to life from this bridge, and whether the Board of Trade made any recommendations to the Railway Company, and with what result; and, having regard to the rider passed by the jury at the inquest that structural alterations should at once be made, what steps the Board of Trade will take in the matter?

MR. HANBURY (on behalf of Mr. RITCHIE): No representative attended the inquest. The Coroner did not ask for an Assessor. An Inquiry by a sub-inspector was ordered as soon as the Return of the accident was received. The Board of Trade do not appear to have had any representations as to danger to life from this bridge. The attention of the Company has, no doubt, been directed to the rider of the Coroner's jury. Whether any communication should be addressed to them by the Board of Trade will depend upon the Report of the sub-inspector.

ASSIZES (CO. DOWN).

MR. PATRICK A. M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction existing among professional gentlemen and their clients, owing to the delay in forwarding them the affirmances and reversals of decrees decided at the recent assizes for county of Down; and, if he will state the cause of delay, and the date at which they will be forwarded to the solicitors having charge of the cases?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The Clerk of the Crown and Peace received the affirmances and reversals taken out at the last Down Assizes on the 30th ultimo and 1st April, and issued them on the date of receipt to the various solicitors concerned. No complaint was made to the Clerk of the Crown and Peace as to any delay in the issue of these documents, nor is he aware that any dissatisfaction, such as is alleged, was expressed.

CRETE.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now inform the House what arrangements the Admirals have made with a view to the distribution of certain food supplies where most required in the interior of Crete?

MR. CURZON: We have had no fresh communication from the Admirals on the subject, nor am I aware that a case for their action has yet arisen. On the contrary we heard yesterday from Her Majesty's Consul that it seemed likely that the Christians in the interior would before long have a double supply of grain, as they would gather the crops of the Mussulman Cretans as well as their own.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Proclamation under which the Blockade of Crete is carried on?

MR. CURZON: There does not appear to be any necessity for laying the Proclamation separately, since it has already appeared in the *Gazette* of March 19. Of course, it will be included in the Papers that will be presented later on.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Government will present further Papers on the affairs of Crete?

MR. CURZON: Two collections of Papers about Crete are in preparation. The first containing information up to the beginning of the year will, I hope, be laid before the Easter recess. The second is being put together with as much rapidity as is possible.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Mahomedans were the aggressors in the fighting outside Canea on Saturday last; why the warships did not shell the Mahomedans; whether any of the men who had been rescued from Candano took part in the fight; and what steps will be taken to prevent the constant sallying forth of Bashi-Bazouks and other armed bands from the cities occupied by the International forces to attack the Christians and commit depredations in the surrounding country?

Mr. CURZON: Her Majesty's Consul telegraphed on the 4th instant that owing to a report that the Admirals had authorised the insurgents on Akrotiri to cross overland to Apokorona, 600 or 800 armed Bashi-Bazouks proceeded to Akrotiri and opened fire on the insurgents. The Admirals intended shelling the Bashi-Bazouks, and were about to do so, when they noticed the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, Major Bor, and other officers approaching the Bashi-Bazouks. They accordingly refrained from firing. We have not heard that any of the men rescued from Candano took part in the fighting. On the contrary, the Mussulman authorities and the Turkish Commander-in-Chief deny *in toto* having given arms to them; but a strict inquiry into the matter is being held by order of the Admirals. In the meantime the latter have ordered all Bashi-Bazouks in Canea to be disarmed, and the operation has been successfully conducted. I should add, as there appears to be a general misunderstanding on the point, that these Bashi-Bazouks are not Turks, but Mahomedan Cretans.

Mr. DILLON: I wish to ask why the presence of the Turkish Commander was considered sufficient reason to prevent the Admirals shelling the Turks when no such reasons were allowed to prevail in the case of the insurgents; and also whether he can inform the House that steps will be taken at Candia and other ports to prevent these excursions and sallies of Bashi-Bazouks, no matter to what race they may belong?

*Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers I should like to ask whether these so-called Bashi-Bazouks are not Cretan Mussulmans, who have been robbed of their lands and all they possessed by these so-called Christian insurgents. [*Cries of* "Oh!"]

Mr. CURZON: I thought I had answered the Question of the hon. Member for East Mayo. It is perfectly obvious that the best method of preventing the Bashi-Bazouks sallying out is to disarm them, and I have already explained that this operation has been successfully conducted.

Mr. DILLON: At Canea only.

Mr. CURZON: I have not heard of their sallying out at other places.

Mr. DILLON: Oh, every day.

Mr. CURZON: As I say, I have not heard of it. The hon. Member is better informed than I am. As regards the other point about the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, I do not know whether the hon. Member means to insinuate that the Admirals ought to have shot at the Turkish Commander-in-Chief when he was really doing his best to prevent these men from committing excesses.

Mr. DILLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that at Retimo, Candia, and other towns the sallies of the Bashi-Bazouks are going on almost every day?

Mr. CURZON: No; I am not.

Mr. J. McLEOD (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can now state if a Presbyterian chaplain has been appointed to the battalion of Seaforth Highlanders serving in Crete?

Mr. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir. The General Officer commanding at Malta telegraphed, on the 31st ultimo, that he was sending a Presbyterian chaplain to Crete.

METROPOLITAN POLICE BOOTS.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he purposes redeeming the promise he made recently in this House to take the opinion of the members of the Metropolitan Police Force as to whether they will sustain a loss in consequence of the method by which the change of system from contract boots to boot money is to be introduced?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): I am afraid the hon. Member has misunderstood my answer to his supplemental Question on this subject. Probably I did not sufficiently hear the Question, and therefore my answer might have been misleading. I made no promise to consult the force now, but said I had already done so before the new system was introduced.

Captain NORTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, am I justified in reading from the printed report which I have here of the answers given by the right hon. Gentleman? He stated there would be no such—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman must take the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as to what his answer really was.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it has been brought to his notice that great inconvenience is experienced by workmen engaged in the building trades owing to some railway companies failing to comply with the Cheap Trains Act of 1883; and whether he will use his influence with all railway companies to cause them to provide an ample service of workmen's trains up to 8 a.m.?

Mr. HANBURY (on behalf of Mr. Ritchie): The attention of the Board of Trade has been directed to this subject, and the railway companies have been requested to furnish a Return showing the workmen's train accommodation on the respective lines. When the information is received the matter will have attention. The Board of Trade, however, cannot make any such general order as the Question seems to contemplate.

CAVALRY REGIMENTS.

Mr. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether cavalry regiments on changing stations (H.M.O.) are directed to leave their horses behind them?

Mr. BRODRICK: Cavalry regiments moving between England and Ireland leave behind them the old horses and their youngest remounts. Cavalry regiments, on change of station in Great Britain or in Ireland, take all their horses with them.

Mr. DUNCOMBE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in an order recently issued by the Inspector General of Cavalry, it is directed that cavalry men on active service are to wear jack boots only, and are not to carry ankle boots also, as in Home marching order?

Mr. BRODRICK: On active service the ankle boots of men belonging to cavalry regiments are not carried by the men, but in the squadron carts, in order to lighten the weight on the horses.

Captain Norton.

Mr. DUNCOMBE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, under a recent War Office letter, men belonging to cavalry regiments are directed, when changing stations (H.M.O.), to carry their tunics in their horses' nosebags?

Mr. BRODRICK: In order to save the tunics from wear on the march men belonging to cavalry regiments are directed to carry them in their horses' nosebags. They are thus available for wear at any halting-place.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the cavalry has been reorganised into three service squadrons, with each squadron a major's command, will he state whether the regulations affecting seconded majors apply to cavalry, under these conditions, *i.e.*, that when a major is seconded a captain is promoted to fill the vacancy?

Mr. BRODRICK: Existing regulations apply equally to cavalry and infantry. When a major is extra-regimentally employed he is not seconded, but the regiment is given an additional captain in his place.

SWANSEA WORKHOUSE (ROMAN CATHOLIC CHILDREN).

Mr. M. J. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that a letter was written by the Rev. C. J. Fitzgerald, Roman Catholic clergyman, St. Joseph's, Greenhill, Swansea, on the 15th February 1897, and addressed to Rev. J. Gower Lewis, D.D., Chairman of the Swansea Board of Guardians, applying for permission for two sisters of St. Joseph's Convent to visit the Roman Catholic children in the cottage home (workhouse); whether he is aware that Mr. Philip Jenkins, a member of the Board, stated, in reply to the letter of application, that the Roman Catholic nuns were members of a secret society; and that Mr. David Jenkins, another member of the Board, moved the following resolution, which is recorded on the minutes of the Board, "That the letter be allowed to lay on the Table for an indefinite period, say, until Roman Catholic priests get married;" whether it is the intention of the Local Government Board to hold an Inquiry into the treatment of the

Roman Catholic priest who visits and the Catholic children who are inmates of the cottage home (workhouse); and whether, in view of the language used by members of this Board, some reparation will be made to the Roman Catholics concerned, and also that this insulting resolution be expunged from the records of the Board?

Mr. CHAPLIN: I have not myself any information as to the facts beyond the statements in the Question. If the Guardians passed such a resolution as that stated, it is very much to be regretted. I have, however, no authority to direct that any entry in the minutes of the Guardians should be expunged. Neither are the Board empowered to require that reparation should be made for the observation of individual Guardians in the course of discussion of a question at the meeting of the Guardians. If I am furnished with a statement of the facts on which complaint is made as to the treatment of the Roman Catholic priest who visits the School, or of the children who are inmates of the School, the matter will receive my attention.

Mr. FLAVIN: I should be very happy to furnish the right hon. Gentleman with the particulars, with a view that he might cause an Inquiry to be made.

TRANSVAAL.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House any information as to the recent disturbances at Krugersdorp, and especially as to the insults addressed to the British Uitlanders by Officers of the Transvaal Government and by other Boers; whether telegrams containing information and complaints from the injured Uitlanders have been stopped by the Boer Government; and whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to see that the Uitlanders, who are already deprived of the right of public meeting and of their independent Press, are not prevented also from using the telegraph?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): On March 30 the British Agent at Pretoria telegraphed to the High Commissioner:—

> "Regret to have to report a most painful incident which occurred at race meeting at Krugersdorp on March 27, and which has been brought to my notice officially by witnesses who were present, when a police officer of South African Republic, and wearing uniform of that Republic, permitted himself publicly to make use of language which I must decline to repeat, in connection with the name of Her Majesty the Queen. I have to-day addressed Note to Government of South African Republic representing occurrence. In my Note I stated that I feel sure His Honour the President will regret incident as deeply as I do, and that I place matter unreservedly in his hands, feeling confident that he will deal with it in a manner that will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government, and will restore mutual good feeling between His Honour's citizens and subjects of Her Majesty. I shall inform you of reply of Government."

On the 1st inst. I received the following additional message from Lord Rosmead:—

> "British Agent at Pretoria reports Government of South African Republic have provisionally suspended police officer referred to, and promised that matter shall be proceeded with in such manner as circumstances appear to require."

And yesterday I received the following further telegram from Lord Rosmead:—

> "British Agent at Pretoria reports President of South African Republic has personally expressed regret at incident, and said that the matter was being investigated."

I have no information as to telegrams being stopped by the Government of the South African Republic.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Has the right hon. Gentleman any information as to the assaults which are reported to have been committed on British subjects, some of whom are said to have been considerably injured, on the same occasion?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir.

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if Sir A. Milner will have instructions to visit Pretoria and confer with President Kruger on the matters at issue between this country and the South African Republic.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It would be premature for me to make any statement as to whether or when such a conference is probable.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1894.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, after a statement made by his predecessor, the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, as to his intentions, and, as he thought, the intentions of Parliament, the Local Government Board intend to continue to act upon the principle laid down by them in reference to applications from town councils, urban district councils, sanitary authorities, and representative bodies, to make orders conferring on them powers in relation to various matters mentioned in Section 33 of the Local Government Act 1894, namely, that the powers should not be conferred indiscriminately, and it has been our practice to ask for the reasons why such power is deemed desirable?

Mr. CHAPLIN: There has been no indisposition on the part of the Local Government Board to confer on the various bodies referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the powers mentioned in Section 33 of the Local Government Act 1894. But, inasmuch as the responsibility for conferring these powers was imposed by Parliament on the Local Government Board, it has hitherto been held that the Department should exercise some discretion in the matter, and not confer them indiscriminately as a matter of course. The number of cases that have been dealt with is very large. For instance, the power of appointing overseers has been given in 894 cases, and the power of appointing and revoking the appointment of assistant overseers in 750. The applications not disposed of are few, and with regard to these, after the explanation of the intentions of the Government, who were responsible for the Act which has been offered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, I shall be disposed to act generally on the views he then expressed in all cases in which it can properly be done consistently with the discretionary power vested in the Board by Parliament.

NIGER CAMPAIGN.

General LAURIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to accord any decoration or other recognition to the troops, both European and Native, for the good service rendered in the recent operations carried on under the orders of the Royal Niger Company?

Mr. BRODRICK: This Question will be considered when the official reports on the operations are received.

ALLOTMENTS (DEVON).

*Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state why the application of the Devon County Council for compulsory powers to acquire land for allotments at Wreyland, in the parish of Bovey Tracey, has been refused?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The order of the County Council provided for the compulsory hiring of a particular field about two acres one rood in extent, for allotment purposes. The number of persons applying for allotments was originally six, but two had since left the parish, and one had intimated that he no longer required an allotment. A public inquiry was held in the district by one of the Board's Inspectors, and the evidence of those interested in the question was taken. It appeared to the Board as the result of this inquiry that it had not been shown that the Parish Council were unable to acquire suitable land by agreement. For instance, it was stated at the inquiry by the lessee of the farm comprising the field proposed to be taken, which was alleged to be specially valuable, that no application had been made to him in respect of any land other than that field. He further stated that he was willing to let other land of the same area and situated at a convenient distance. The owner of the land also stated that the particular field was the only land in respect of which application was made to him. For these and other reasons the Local Government Board arrived at the conclusion that the order should not be confirmed by them.

*Mr. SEALE-HAYNE: Did the inspector visit the field offered in lieu of that selected by the applicants?

Mr. CHAPLIN: Yes, Sir, he did; and when the land was selected by the Committee instructed for the purpose it was not visited by them.

*Mr. SEALE-HAYNE: In consequence of the unsatisfactory nature of the answer, I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to the matter on the Estimates.

LONDON WATER SUPPLY (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, with regard to that portion of the instructions to the Royal Commission on the London Water Companies which instructs them to inquire and Report whether the financial considerations of the question render it desirable that the undertakings of the water companies should be acquired by a public authority or authorities, will he state on what basis of purchase the Commissioners will be able to form an estimate of a fair price, whether it will be on the basis of proceedings under the Lands Clauses Act, under the so-called "Plunket" Clause, or under some other form of arbitration?

Mr. CHAPLIN: It appears to me that it will be for the Commissioners to form such estimates as they may consider necessary, and for that purpose to adopt such method or methods as they may deem desirable. They can, if they think fit, form alternative estimates on different bases, but this is a question for them to decide.

EMIGRANTS' INFORMATION OFFICE.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it comes within the recognised duty of the Emigrants' Information Office to make inquiry into the credentials of agricultural settlements that are extensively advertised in the British Isles as being under the control and management of Colonial Governments; whether he is aware that the irrigation Colonies at Mildura, in Victoria, and Renmark, in South Australia, now in liquidation, were so advertised in Great Britain and Ireland for years; that a large number of persons were induced to emigrate on the strength of the alleged Governmental guarantee; that many of them are now ruined through the failure of the promoters to fulfil their promises and obligations; and that it transpired, in the course of evidence before the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, that these settlements were in no sense regulated by Government, as advertised all over Great Britain and Ireland, but were entirely in the nature of private speculation; and whether any effectual steps can be taken to put a stop to such fraudulent practices?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It would not be possible for the Emigrants' Information Office to inquire, in the absence of any special complaints, into all the various settlements and enterprises advertised to attract intending emigrants. All that can be done, as a rule, is to issue warnings, when necessary, and to answer as far as possible specific inquiries. The Secretary of State is not in a position to express an opinion as to the special cases referred to by the hon. Member.

PRINCE OF WALES'S HOSPITAL FUND.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary, to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, (1) whether with the advice and assistance of the Controller of Stamps at Somerset House, Messrs. Thomas de la Rue and Co., the manufacturers of stamps for the Government, are now preparing stamps for issue to the public in furtherance of the objects of the Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund by way of memento of the commemoration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee; and (2) whether there is any truth in the statement that the Post Office authorities declined to lend any assistance in the distribution and sale of these stamps, although the Council of the fund offered to pay any expenses that might fall upon the Department for the rendering of that service; and, if so, what are the reasons for such action on the part of the Post Office authorites, seeing that the object is a national one directly connected with the commemoration of the 60 years' reign of the Sovereign?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has no knowledge of the facts stated in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's Question. The Postmaster General did decline—though with great regret—to undertake the sale of stamps for the benefit of the hospital fund, on the ground that if the Department once embarked on such an undertaking it could hardly refuse to extend it hereafter to other subscriptions of Imperial or national importance, and the Post Office would consequently commit itself to a new kind of business of almost indefinite amount, totally independent of that for which the Post Office exists, and which would impose a very serious strain on the heavily-burdened staff.

POST OFFICE GUIDE.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he has observed that on page 2 of the cover of the Post Office quarterly Guide, just issued for April 1897, no notice is taken of the important alterations in the postal regulations which came into operation on 1st February, although it professes to give a list of the principal changes and alterations that have taken place since January; and what officer in the Department is responsible for the editing and issuing of the Guide?

Mr. HANBURY: The omission to call attention on page 2 of the cover of the Post Office quarterly Guide for April to the alterations in Money Order Rates, to which it is presumed the hon. Member refers, was, it is regretted, the result of an oversight. The Secretary to the Post Office is responsible to the Postmaster General for the whole administration of the Post Office.

LOCAL LOANS FUND (IRELAND).

Mr. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been drawn to the decision on appeal, at the recent assizes for the County Donegal, of Mr. Justice Holmes, in the case of Travers *v.* Doherty, affirming the decision of Judge Webb to the effect that the Local Loan Fund Boards cannot legally recover on foot of renewal bills of exchange; and (2) whether having regard to the recent Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the administration of the Loan Fund Acts in Ireland, and the memorial presented to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant by depositors in the loan funds, it is the intention of the Irish Government to take any steps, and if so what steps, to safeguard the interests of the many depositors whose money has been illegally advanced to borrowers?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The fact is, I am informed, as stated in the first paragraph. With regard to the concluding inquiry in the second paragraph, the Irish Government, as has already been pointed out, cannot accept any responsibility for losses incurred by depositors in the funds of these loan societies, or for the transactions of the officers of these bodies. I may state, however, that the whole question of the management of the loan societies is at present engaging the careful attention of the Loan Fund Board, and that the Government are also considering the question of the necessity of further legislation with a view to strengthen the administration and supervision of the Central Board.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Do the Government accept any responsibility (seeing that this Department is carried on by the Government and the Castle inspectors) for the depositors' money?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The hon. Member is entirely mistaken in that view.

WATERFORD, DUNGARVAN AND LISMORE RAILWAY.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) whether he is aware that the Waterford, Dungarvan, and Lismore Railway was opened for traffic in 1878, the ratepayers of the city and county of Waterford being bound to contribute £14,000 per annum for 40 years to enable the share capital of £280,000 to be raised, the Treasury advancing £93,000 on mortgage loan, and that the ratepayers have already contributed £300,000 in payment of dividends, and still have a liability of £250,000 to face; will he explain why the Treasury, though having received £22,000 in part payment of interest, now propose to adopt the extreme course of taking possession of the line, thus taking the management out of the hands of the directors, who, from their local knowledge and experience, are the best judges of how the line should be worked in the interests of the ratepayers; (2) is he aware that in 1888 the Board of Works sent down Mr. Cotton, general manager of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway, to make a thorough examination of the line, and that his report practically approved of the working of the line as carried out by the directors; and that in February 1896 the Board of Works sent down their engineer, Mr. Haire, who made an exhaustive examination, and why, on the Company's applying for a copy of his report, they were refused it, the Board of Works stating that it was all the less necessary to send it as the engineer could not suggest any improvement; and (3) whether the Government will lay these reports of Mr. Cotton and Mr. Haire upon the Table for the information of the House, and meanwhile will undertake to restrain action on the part of the Board of Works until the Estimates for the Board of Works come before the House, in order that opportunity may be given for Debate, and the views of the ratepayers taken whose interests are so very much larger than the Treasury?

Mr. HANBURY: The facts are as stated in the first paragraph, except that the local contribution is for 35 and not for 40 years. The Treasury have as yet come to no final decision as implied in the second paragraph. I cannot undertake to lay on the Table confidential reports to a Government Department, nor to state the effect of portions of such reports, and I can give no pledge as to what action the Treasury may take before the Vote for the Board of Works is discussed.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.) asked when the Board of Works would inform the directors of the intention to take possession of the line, and why they had adopted a course in regard to this railway different from that adopted to other lines?

Mr. HANBURY: Will the hon. Member put that Question on the Paper?

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In view of the importance of the facts, and that the Board of Works are threatening to take possession of the line, may I ask whether the Government will agree to leave the matter in suspense, at any rate during the Recess, and until the Estimates come up, so that the matter may be discussed before the step is taken?

Mr. HANBURY: I am afraid I cannot give such a pledge at once. But I will see what can be done in the matter.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman let me communicate with him again on the matter, as this is a very serious step?

Mr. HANBURY: Yes, I shall be glad to receive any representations from the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into the former instances in which the Board of Works have foreclosed?

Mr. HANBURY: I cannot answer that Question.

Captain DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the permanent way of this line is in very excellent order—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That Question does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he has been consulted by the Irish Board of Works with regard to their correspondence with the Waterford and Lismore Railway, in which they threaten to foreclose their mortgage and sell the line for non-payment of interest; (2) is he aware that the late Duke of Devonshire advanced to this Company, practically without security and for public benefit, a sum nearly equal to the Government loan, in addition to making the connection with Fermoy at his own expense (now worked by the Waterford and Lismore Company); and (3) whether the Treasury, before sanctioning either a sale or foreclosure, will ascertain the views of the Duke of Devonshire as to the effect of such a step on the public interest and on the guaranteeing ratepayers of Waterford, who are now assessed £14,000 a year to maintain this railway?

Mr. HANBURY: The answer to the first and second paragraphs is, Yes. The step suggested in the third paragraph has already been taken, and we are expecting a reply from the Duke of Devonshire within the next day or two.

ISLAND OF LEWIS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can state when the Carloway Road, Island of Lewis, which has been in course of construction for several years, will be completed?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: The construction of the Carloway Road was stopped, as the hon. Member is aware, on account of the bankruptcy of the contractor and the arbitration consequent thereon, which is now concluded. The road cannot be completed as contemplated, because its original cost was under-estimated by the engineer appointed by the County Council. After payment of the costs of arbitration out of the grant of £15,000, the sum of £2,455 remaining will be expended so as to make the road as useful as possible for the purposes for which it was originally intended.

ICELAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the possibility of Iceland falling into the hands of a great unfriendly Power, and the fact that the island possesses good harbours open all the year round, he will consider the advisability of protecting the north-west coast of Scotland from possible attack?

MR. BRODRICK: The Joint Naval and Military Committee do not consider Iceland as a source of danger—[*laughter*]—and have not recommended works on the north-west coast of Scotland. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOLS BILL.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can lay upon the Table of the House, before the Second Reading of the Necessitous Board Schools Bill, a statement showing the probable effect of the Bill upon the various School Board districts which will receive aid under the Bill, according to the latest returns available in the Education Department?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): I shall be happy to give a return which will show approximately the effect of the Bill. It will be ready for distribution in the course of next week. The return can, however, only be a rough statement. The materials for it in the hands of the Department are the financial statements of the School Boards for the year ended 29th September 1895 (the latest complete returns available), and those returns do not give with accuracy the data required for the purposes of the Bill.

Lord Advocate.

ASIA MINOR AND NORTHERN SYRIA.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the continued unrest and alarm which prevail among the Christian population in Eastern Asia Minor and Northern Syria, and to the danger of fresh massacres there similar to that recently perpetrated at Tokat; what steps are being taken to guard against the risk of such massacres; and whether Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to point out the desirability of recalling Shakir Pasha, whose character and career have made him an object of dread to the Eastern Christians?

*MR. CURZON: Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has reported apprehensions of disturbance at Bitlis, where some Mussulmans were arrested who were supposed to be planning a massacre. At Behesni, near Birejik (Kharput Province), where there had been an attempt at a massacre a fortnight ago, which was suppressed. At Talori, where the Kurds were menacing the villages, and the Mutessarif at Moush had sent for troops. Her Majesty's ship *Sybille* is cruising along the coast from Mersyna to Alexandretta, and has on board Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Adana, who is visiting Payas and other districts. Constant representations are being made by the Ambassadors, and orders of the strictest kind have been sent by the Turkish Government to their officers throughout the Provinces. As the guilty officials at Tokat have been dismissed, and the Commandant of the troops has been arrested in consequence of the massacre that occurred there, there is reason to hope that these orders will be obeyed elsewhere. I do not know if the Shakir Pasha mentioned in the Question is the officer at the head of the Reforms Commission. The description given in the concluding paragraph does not appear to be applicable to him.

MR. BRYCE: It is applicable at least in this sense, that Shakir Pasha, rightly or wrongly, is in fact feared by the Christians.

*MR. CURZON: I am bound to say that that does not tally with what we have heard of him. He has always been represented as one of the most distinguished and fair-minded of the Turkish officials.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): May I ask whether dismissal is the only punishment which has been inflicted on those whom the right hon. Gentleman has called "the guilty officials"?

*MR. CURZON: The investigation which, as I told the House a short time ago, has been authorised by the Turkish Government, has not yet taken place. Further punishment must depend upon the result of the investigation.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Is it not the fact that these officials were immediately put under arrest, and are about to be tried by a Special Commission?

*MR. CURZON: No, Sir; if I am right in my recollection they were dismissed from their posts and subsequently put under arrest.

MR. BRYCE: Is it not the fact that Shakir Pasha was the person who suggested the establishment of the Kurdish "Hamidieh" irregulars, who have been the cause of such frightful evils?

*MR. CURZON: I am not aware of it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask whether the Foreign Office have any evidence at all to justify the recall of Shakir Pasha?

*MR. CURZON: As far as I know we have none.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is in a position to state the amount paid to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account under the Local Taxation (Ireland) Estate Duty Act of 1896; and to what purpose the Government intend that the money shall be devoted?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The sum of £74,870 13s. 2d. has been paid to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account under the Act of last year. The Irish Government are not yet in a position to state to what purpose the money will be allocated.

LOCAL OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

MR. T. R. LEUTY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he has taken any steps to ascertain the feeling of the local authorities of England and Wales as to the provisions of the Local Officers' Superannuation Bill; and if he has, will he inform the House with what result?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Local Government Board have not taken any steps to ascertain the views of the local authorities in England and Wales as to the provisions of the Bill mentioned. There are many thousands of such authorities with whom it would have been necessary to communicate for that purpose, and the Board have not seen any reason for adopting the unusual course of asking the authorities for their views as to the Measure.

SWAZILAND.

*SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House any information as to recent disturbances in Swaziland; and whether Her Majesty's Government have any special representative in Swaziland?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information of recent disturbances in Swaziland. If any serious disturbance had taken place the British Consul in Swaziland would no doubt have reported it to the High Commissioner?

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiry?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will, if the hon. Gentleman desires it; but it is really unnecessary to make these inquiries about unfounded rumours. ["Hear, hear!"]

THIRD CLASS RAILWAY TICKETS (IRELAND).

MR. AUSTIN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can state if through third class tickets are to be issued to the south of Ireland from Euston, under the new accelerated mail service, continuing the arrangement of the London and North Western Railway to Holyhead?

MR. HANBURY: It is not in contemplation, so far as the Postmaster General is aware, to issue through third class tickets to the South of Ireland from

Euston under the accelerated mail service. The London and North Western Railway Company are understood to be making preparations for the conveyance of third-class passengers by the mail trains between London and Holyhead, but there is no third-class accommodation provided on board the Holyhead and Kingstown packets. As regards the service from Dublin to the South of Ireland, the Postmaster General would welcome the change if the company desired to carry third-class passengers by the mail trains, provided punctuality in the working were maintained.

PARISH MEETING (CAREW, PEMBROKESHIRE).

Mr. W. REES-DAVIES (Pembrokeshire): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the action of the Chairman of the Parish Council of Carew, Pembrokeshire, relative to the recent annual parish meeting for the election of councillors; whether he is aware that the Parish Council met on the 6th ult., and, in accordance with Section 45 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1894, fixed Saturday evening the 20th ult. for the parish meeting as being the most convenient date for the electors to attend; and that the Chairman of the Parish Council, who was absent from the meeting referred to, subsequently issued notices convening the parish meeting for Thursday the 18th ult., a day unsuitable to the electors; whether the Chairman had any power to override the action of the Council, and whether the notices were consequently illegal; and whether he proposes to take any steps to prevent a recurrence of such action in future?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Parish Council were not empowered to fix the day on which the election of Parish Councillors should take place. The Regulations as to these elections provided that the parish meeting for the election of councillors should be held on the 18th March, or on such of the three preceding days as for special reasons might be fixed by the County Councils. No other day, as I understand, was fixed by the County Council, and I do not see that the Chairman acted illegally in the matter.

Mr. Hanbury.

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS.

Mr. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what steps he intends to take to prevent the deportation of paupers from England and Wales to Ireland?

Mr. CHAPLIN: In January of last year the Local Government Board received a communication from the Local Government Board for Ireland, suggesting that a Departmental Committee should be appointed to consider the question of the existing law as regards the removal of poor persons from England and Scotland to Ireland. The Board replied that they would be prepared to nominate a member of the proposed Committee to represent England, but they have not received any further communication on the subject.

MULLINGAR PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been directed to the complaint, publicly made by the Roman Catholic Administrator of Mullingar, at the meeting of the Labourers' Houses Committee, of the insulting language used on the Bench in the Petty Sessions Court of Mullingar by the resident magistrate, Major O'Brien, towards the priesthood of the town; and (2) whether it is the intention of the authorities to transfer this official to some other locality?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: My right hon. Friend has communicated on the subject of this Question with Major O'Brien, who is quite unconscious of having used at any time language to which the description in the first paragraph could apply. The hon. Member apparently has in view a report which appeared in a local newspaper of a case heard before Major O'Brien on the 13th March, when a man named Gorry was prosecuted by the police for assaulting his wife, and Major O'Brien is alleged to have said to defendant either, "Don't mind what Father O'Reilly says at all," or, "Don't mind what Father O'Reilly said, as it is not evidence." Both of these remarks had reference to the legal objection to hearsay evidence, and could not be construed as disrespectful towards a clergyman or any other person concerned. The reply to the second paragraph is in the negative.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the case of Corporal Francis Lynn, who served the British South Africa Company in the Matabele Mounted Police, entered the Transvaal under command of Dr. Jameson, was severely wounded in the subsequent engagement, and was removed to Durban, where after much suffering he died of his wounds; whether he is aware that the British South Africa Company have up till now refused all compensation to the father of the deceased in respect of the death of their servant caused as above stated, and have even declined to comply with the father's request that his son's effects should be sent home, but have allowed the same to be sold in Buluwayo; and whether the right hon. Gentleman can see his way to call the attention of the Company to the case, with the view of securing that just compensation shall be awarded in the circumstances?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Corporal Lynn's death does not appear to have been directly due to his wound, but to an attack of dysentery brought on by a combination of unfavourable conditions. The British South Africa Company deny all responsibility for Dr. Jameson's incursion and for its results to those who took part in it. I understand that Corporal Lynn's soiled effects were sold by auction at Salisbury, but that some letters and souvenirs were retained and sent to his father.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

*MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any steps have been taken by the Government to inquire into and remedy the grievances complained of by the higher officers in the British Museum; and whether, if a Committee of Inquiry has been appointed, he will lay upon the Table a statement of their names and of the terms of reference?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Departmental Committee to which my hon. Friend referred has not yet met, but will do so after the Easter holidays. The names of the gentlemen composing it are Sir E. Hamilton, Sir A. Godley, and Mr. G. H. Murray. With regard to the terms of reference the Committee has been appointed to inquire into the organisation, pay, and duties of the Museum staff, including the system under which the staff is recruited and the reasons for or against competitive examination, either limited or otherwise; the classification, scale of salary, and hours of attendance required to insure the efficient and proper discharge of the duties of the establishment; and whether it is practicable to assign clerical and routine work wholly or in part to clerks of the second division; and generally, any matters connected with the Museum establishment in regard to which they may be of opinion that alteration of existing regulations is desirable.

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND).

MR. W. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can give an assurance that the Bill dealing with Private Bill Procedure in Scotland will be introduced during the present Session; and, if so, when he hopes to be able to introduce it?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I can give no pledge when it can be introduced, but the Scotch Office have a Bill prepared on the subject.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Commissioners of Works under any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of Land for the Extension of the Patent Office, and for purposes connected therewith (Queen's recommendation signified), upon Thursday.—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

RESTRAINT OF EVICTIONS (LONDON) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 28th April.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND [CONTRIBUTION].

Committee to consider of authorising the Secretary of State in Council of India to contribute out of the Revenues of India such sums as may be required to meet certain liabilities under any Act of the present Session to make provision for the transfer of the assets, liabilities, and management of the Regular Widows' Fund and of the Elder Widows' Fund to the Secretary of State in Council of India (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Thursday.—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.

Committee to consider of authorising the Charge on the Revenues of India of any addition to the Superannuation or Retiring Allowances, which may become payable under any Act of the present Session, to remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to Officers on his Establishment (Queen's Recommendation signified).—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

CRETE (MINISTERIAL POLICY).

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will assign a day for the discussion of the Address to the Crown of which I have given notice? [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"]—[The Motion standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman was as follows: Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT,—Greece and Crete (Employment of British Forces),—That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that the Forces of the Crown may not be employed against the Kingdom of Greece or the people of Crete.]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: As there is not a word in the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman which explicitly expresses condemnation of anything we have done, are doing, or have announced our intention of doing or our preparedness to do, I am forced to the conclusion that the object of the right hon. Gentleman is not to put a direct issue but to evade one. [*Ministerial cheers.*] In these circumstances I do not think it would be in the interests of the conduct of business in the House that I should grant a day. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT, who was received with Opposition cheers: The right hon. Gentleman appears entirely to have misconceived the object and the intention of that Motion. I may be permitted to explain the purport of it. The right hon. Gentleman asked me yesterday whether the Motion was a Vote of Censure on the Government. I should not say that it was a Vote of Censure on the Government, because a Vote of Censure can only be addressed to something that has actually been done; but there may be a want of confidence if we anticipate what is likely to be done, and what the Government have expressed their intention of doing. I will state what the Motion is. The Executive Government, of course, are primarily responsible for the employment of the forces of the Crown. This Motion is addressed to the Crown, praying that these forces shall not be employed against the Greek Kingdom or the Cretan people. That Motion, if it was carried, would be a restraint on the action of the Government if they propose so to employ them. Now, the Opposition have a right, and it is their duty, to put on record their view of the present situation. The right hon. Gentleman the other day invited us to raise some definite issue. We propose to raise such an issue; and it is this. So far as the information given us as yet by the Government goes, we hold that there is no justification for the employment of the forces of the Crown against the Greek Kingdom or the Cretan people. We challenge the policy of the Government on that point. [*Opposition cheers.*] It is necessary to do so now immediately before the Recess, because when Parliament met again we might find the country embarked in hostilities with the Greek Kingdom without any declaration by the Government to Parliament as to the object of such a policy. [*Opposition* *cheers.*] From that point of view this is, of course, a Motion of want of confidence in the Government. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Let me point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the terms of his Motion are studiously ambiguous. [*Ministerial cheers.*] We have stated in the most explicit terms, we have by our action shown, that we are prepared to use the forces of the Crown to resist certain action of the insurgents in Crete. Is that or is that not using the forces of the Crown against the Cretan people? We have announced that we are prepared to blockade Greece, as the right hon. Gentleman did on a previous occasion. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Is that using the forces of the Crown against the Greek Kingdom? The right hon. Gentleman has only to modify his Resolutions so as to condemn one of these two propositions, the first of which deals with what we are actually doing in Crete, and the other of which deals with the announcement of our intention to do something in certain contingencies, and a direct issue will be raised between the two sides of the House. Unless he is prepared to make that modification in his Resolution, it does not seem to me that any other course is open to us except the one I have adopted. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said it might be for the convenience of the House to state that on Friday next the English Votes in Class I. and the English Votes in Class III. would be taken.

In answer to Mr. DILLON,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he did not imagine that there was any ground for taking the Report of the Resolution as to necessitous Board Schools before Twelve o'clock, because the midnight rule did not apply to it.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 27th April.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tomorrow till Tuesday 4th May.

MOTIONS.

TRAWLERS' LICENSING.

Bill to establish the Licensing and Registration of Trawlers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. Haldane, Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Buchanan, and Mr. Crombie; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 4th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 191.]

WINE AND BEERHOUSE ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Licensing of Beerhouses and Places for the Sale of Cider and Wine by Retail in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Courtney, Sir Cameron Gull, and Mr. Cameron Corbett; presented and Read the First time; to be read a Second time Tomorrow, and to be printed.—[Bill 192.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FOOD SUPPLIES (UNITED KINGDOM).

*MR. HENRY SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) rose to call attention to the wholly inadequate production of food supplies within the area of the United Kingdom in relation to its large and increasing population, and to move:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the dependence of the United Kingdom on foreign imports for the necessaries of life, and the consequences that might arise therefrom in the event of war, demands the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government."

He stated that since he had placed his Motion on the Paper numerous letters had been received by him from all parts of the country supporting it, and urging the necessity for its discussion in the House of Commons. The terms of his Motion had also been unanimously endorsed by a conference of delegates at Ross on March 19th, convened by the Midland Union of Conservative Associations, by whom it was treated as a non-Party Question. The Motion was also adopted in a similar manner by a large conference of over 400 delegates of the Lancashire and Cheshire Conservative Working Men's Federation held at Bolton on Saturday, and the substance of it had been confirmed by the executive committee of the National Agricultural Union. It was now an established fact that the United Kingdom was largely dependent on foreign imports for the necessaries of life. We imported most of our breadstuffs, while, in addition, butter, eggs, cheese, meat, fruit, sugar, vegetables, milk, lard, and oats and barley were being imported in large and increasing quantities every year. For the sake of simplicity he would deal only with breadstuffs, which the people of this country must have in regular quantities, and for which they could not be expected to pay fluctuating and enhanced prices. The national annual consumption of wheat and flour amounted to over 28,000,000 quarters, a steadily increasing quantity; 19,000,000 quarters, also an increasing quantity, were imported from foreign and possibly hostile countries, and from 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 were imported from India, Australasia, and Canada. This was now a decreasing quantity. The balance of between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 quarters we produced at home, not including wheat used for seed and farm purposes. Five out of every six of the people in the kingdom were fed on imported breadstuffs, and of these five, four, or two-thirds of the population, were fed on foreign imports, and the number would grow larger and larger every year. It was difficult to ascertain what were the reserves of breadstuffs in the country, but he doubted whether they ever exceeded three months' supply, and they often sank below one month's supply. On January 1 this year the amount of maize, wheat and flour in the country was only 2,133,000 quarters, or less than three weeks' supply. In the event of a declaration of war a monopoly would be created, the breadstuffs being in private hands. Our present dependence on foreign food supplies was of modern growth, and unprecedented in the history of the world. All the other Great Powers were practically self-supporting. France was self-supporting. In the Franco-Prussian War France was never in danger of starvation, except in beleaguered towns, and then only from want of commissariat organisation and foresight. Russia and the United States were not only self-supporting, but were also two of the largest grain exporting countries in the world. At their good pleasure they fed more than four-sevenths of our population. The countries forming the Triple Alliance produced three-fourths of their supply in time of peace, and in war time could support themselves if necessary. During the ten years from 1883 to 1893, Germany, notwithstanding her great increase in industrial prosperity, had increased her wheat area by 300,000 acres. England alone, with a world-wide empire and with the largest industrial population relatively to her area that had ever been known, lived from hand to mouth and imported five-sixths of her food supply. Two-thirds of it came from countries over whose internal policy England had no control, and against whose commercial and fiscal policy she had deprived herself of all means of retaliation. In 1812, when we were fighting France and America, and when the population was half what it was now, we imported no wheat or flour; we were self-supporting. Yet it was a remarkable fact that the price of the quartern loaf rose to 1s. 8d., and there were bread riots in many of our large towns. That was significant as showing the sensitiveness of the price of bread. In 1840 the population of Great Britain was 17½ millions, and of that population 16½ millions were fed on home-grown wheat. Ireland was self-supporting. In 1843 Cobden estimated that of the annual national consumption of 21,000,000 quarters we only imported one million. When Cobden and his disciples agitated for the repeal of the Corn Laws 50 years ago they did not anticipate the present state of affairs. He would read one or two extracts from Cobden's speeches. The following was from a speech of his delivered after the American war, and in connection with the cotton famine:—

"I doubt the wisdom, I certainly doubt the prudence, of a great body of industrial people allowing themselves so continually to live in dependence upon foreign Powers for the supply of food and raw material, knowing that a system of warfare exists by which, at any moment without notice—without any help on their part or means of prevention—they are liable to have

> the raw material or the food withdrawn from them—cut off, without any power to resist or hinder it."

Then, in 1844, Cobden said:—

> "These philosophical men, so profoundly ignorant of what is immediately around them, will tell us that Free Trade will throw their land out of cultivation. I predict with Lord Ducie and others that, so far from throwing land out of use, Free Trade in corn is the very way to increase the production at home, and stimulate the cultivation of the poorer soils by compelling the application of more capital and labour to them. We do not—"

(in consequence of Free Trade in corn)

> "anticipate having one quarter less corn from the soil of this country."

He thought that the House would agree that, whatever else Cobden was, he was a very poor prophet. He was of opinion that if Cobden had lived to the present day he would, in view of the total failure of his prophecies, have himself advocated the reimposition of the corn duties. Since 1845 our home production of wheat had steadily decreased, while the population and imports had as steadily increased. The wheat area of this country 40 years ago was 4,199,812 acres, but in 1896 it was only 1,734,118 acres, and now we had 14,000,000 more people to feed. Since 1853 we had had no war to test the situation, and in the meantime other nations had largely increased the number of their battleships and fast cruisers, or commerce destroyers. It should be borne in mind that the Crimean war was in no sense a naval war, and that our commerce was never threatened. Yet the mere fact that we were at war sent wheat up from 55s. to 75s. per quarter, and at that time the quartern loaf in London cost 1s. to 1s. 4d. He thought the conclusion they were bound to arrive at was, that there was absolutely nothing in history to justify the belief that any country—particularly an island Empire like our own—could afford to depend so largely on foreign imports for its food. In the words of Lord Carnavon—

> "Great Britain, with its imports of raw materials and foods interfered with, would be in danger of becoming, instead of a great Empire, a pauperised, discontented, over-populated island in the North Sea."

Dealing with the risks involved in the event of war, he said everyone who read the daily papers must admit that the possibility of our being involved in a European war was not an impossible contingency. It was a national risk against which we were bound to insure. The question was, were we properly insured? Was our great industrial population properly and reasonably insured against famine prices for food, particularly bread, in the event of such a calamity as a European war? He submitted that we were not. ["Hear, hear!"] They would probably be told that the fleet was supreme at sea, and that our shores could not be invaded; that food supplies could always be landed on the indented shores of these islands, war or no war; that foreign countries would never deprive themselves of the benefit of our markets; that it was an economic necessity for us to buy food in the cheapest markets; that the present position was inevitable; and that nothing must be done to raise the price of bread in the slightest degree. He desired shortly to examine these statements. For the purposes of his argument he would admit our fleet was supreme at sea against any possible combination, though he would point out, in passing, that this could only be certainly established by a practical test. But he admitted that we had, or were determined to have, an invincible Navy, and that our shores were safe from blockade. We could not, however, compel foreign, and possibly hostile, countries to supply us with food, however strong our Navy. Our reserve of wheat was at present completely out of our control. We got one-fifth of our yearly supply from Russia, two-fifths from the United States and the Argentine. Russia, for her own needs, prohibited the export of wheat in 1891. Let them take an extreme case. Suppose Russia again prohibited the export of wheat in order to put us in a difficulty, and at the same time suppose the crops in the United States failed. What remedy had we got? Absolutely none. If this was done in early summer we should be deprived of two-fifths of our wheat supply for 15 months. We could not grow wheat by Act of Parliament, and nowhere else in the world could we get at short notice 18,000,000 quarters of wheat. Again, assuming foreign countries did not prohibit exports, the question of landing food supplies on our shores became a question of commercial risk in time of war. One or two hostile cruisers—even if our fleet was invincible—turned loose in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean would raise the rates of Marine Insurance and of seamen's wages, which would mean a large rise in the price to the consumer. That was an element which high authorities seemed altogether to ignore. During the American Civil War the rates of insurance in blockade runners (no ordinary steamers ran) rose 900 per cent.; seamen's wages rose 300 per cent.; and salt bought for 30s. per ton was sold for £340 per ton, after having run the blockade. No doubt that was an extreme case, but we were in a far more vulnerable position than the Southern States were at that time, because our necessities were greater and we imported large quantities of food. We could not be blockaded as the Southern Ports were. But the *Alabama* drove the American flag off the seas, and some said American trade had never recovered from the loss that was then inflicted. One or two modern *Alabamas* would create a sense of insecurity and raise insurance rates and the price of bread by leaps and bounds. Let the House consider the ocean routes by which our grain ships came. Russian wheat was brought chiefly from Odessa and through the Dardanelles, a distance of 4,000 miles. American and Argentine wheat came across the Atlantic and from the Pacific; and Australian and Indian came round the Cape, distances of from 3,000 to 12,000 miles. However strong our Navy, how could we hope to keep down insurance rates under these circumstances—in a war with some naval Power that possessed cruisers capable of steaming 30 knots or more? With regard to the question of contraband of war, when they remembered that at the present moment six of the great civilised Powers of the world were blockading Crete and preventing provisions being landed, they must come to the conclusion that it was a recognised method of civilised warfare to prevent the necessaries of life getting into the possession of an enemy even if carried in neutral bottoms. He declined to admit that the present position was inevitable, or that we were bound to import our food from the cheapest markets. We did not apply any economic argument of that kind to our Navy. Whatever an invincible navy cost us, we were prepared to pay. It was equally necessary to insure against famine priced goods. It was a question of national insurance within reasonable limits, and the rate, when ascertained, should be paid by the Imperial Exchequer. The cost would be felt very little by the population at large, and it would secure us against what might be a dreadful national calamity. He thought he had said enough to show that there was a strong and urgent *primâ facie* case for a Government inquiry into the subject, and that was all his Motion asked. It was not his business to suggest remedies, but he would put those in which he personally believed before the House, without, however, desiring in any way to commit any Member to them who might be disposed to support his Motion as it stood. The first of these was the Commercial Federation of our colonies. The Secretary to the Colonies in his speech, at the Canada Club Dinner on March 25th 1896, advocated a system founded on the principle of the German Zollverein. His remarks were made with reference to the following Resolution which had been passed at the Ottawa Conference in 1894:—

> "That this conference records its belief in the advisability of a Customs reform between Great Britain and her colonies, by which trade within the Empire may be placed upon a more favourable footing to that which is carried on with foreign countries."

If that meant that we were to obtain our food supplies from our colonies on better terms than from foreign countries, it was a partial remedy for the state of things he had described. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that,

> "at any rate a proposition of that kind is entitled to our respectful consideration, and if we object to it we ought, I think, to propose an alternative, and we ought to say at once that all we have said, all we have done, all we have thought about Imperial unity has been thrown away, and that that idea must be abandoned as an empty dream."

Further, in speaking of the principle of Free Trade, which was involved in his first remarks, the right hon. Gentleman said,

> "I have not such a pedantic admiration for it that if sufficient advantage were offered me I would not consider a deviation from the strict doctrine."

He hoped and believed the right hon. Gentleman would take the opportunity, when the representatives of our colonies would shortly be in our great City, of advancing this idea of commercial federation further. ["Hear, hear!"] One great danger in connection with our food supply might be avoided if, instead of getting our wheat from America, Argentina, and Russia, we were to obtain it from Australasia, India, and Canada. There were at the present moment over 200,000,000 acres in Central and Western Canada waiting for the plough, and we could with preferential duties supply ourselves with all the breadstuffs that we needed across the shortest Atlantic route and the one furthest away from hostile ports. The danger of absolute dependence on foreign countries would thus be done away with. Here was surely a direction of inquiry to which the Government might usefully turn their attention. ["Hear, hear!"] The next remedy was the increase of our wheat production at home. We required a wheat reserve, and the best place to have it was in our barnyards and stackyards. ["Hear, hear!"] It was sometimes said that agriculture at home was played out, that nature was against it, and that it might as well be given up. Personally he could not subscribe to that doctrine. At the present time there were less than 2,000,000 acres of wheat land in the United Kingdom. Quadruple this area and 8,000,000 acres —one-sixth of the cultivable area of the United Kingdom—would give us practically all, or nearly all, the breadstuffs we required. The nature of the land was also admirably suited for the purpose, and the problem he had been endeavouring to place before the House would be solved. On the point of the productiveness of the land the hon. Member quoted from the evidence of Mr. W. G. Harris, from the County of Devon, who gave testimony on this question before the Royal Commission on Agriculture, and whose evidence had never been contradicted, showing that the land of the United Kingdom was, under equal economic conditions, 50s. per acre more productive than the foreign land whose produce beat it in our markets. At present the British farmer was undersold in the market because his own fiscal system was against him. He should probably be told he was talking protection. He was not afraid of the accusation, although he did not wish to commit anybody except himself. But he should appeal to the highest individual political authority whom he recognised. He meant the present Prime Minister of England. Lord Salisbury, speaking at a dinner at the Hotel Metropole, of the Associated Chambers of Commerce on March 10th last, having alluded to the Protectionist attitude of France and America, said:—

> "Do not imagine for a moment that I am going to be heterodox. I do not doubt that Free Trade is the policy for this country, which this country will continue to pursue. . . . I refer to it for another purpose. You cannot say that you are alone right and all other nations wrong. You would, in that case, place yourself in the position of the celebrated dissentient Irish juryman, who told his brother jurymen that he had never met eleven such obstinate people in his life. Is it not possible there is no principle, and that Free Trade is good for one country, and for the resources, the temper, and the climate of one nation and not another."

If that was true, as he believed it was, then Free Trade was a question, not of principle, but of expediency, and it became at once a proper subject of Government inquiry. Lord Salisbury on the same occasion said:—

> "I cannot conceal from myself. . . that we are injured by the knowledge other nations have that, under no circumstances, shall we betake ourselves to any kind of retaliation. You might as well send a party to take a fortress without guns as to enter upon this warfare with such an inability as that."

He confessed, when he read these words he came to the conclusion—and he was very glad to think it—that this distinguished Statesman was rather half-hearted in his devotion to the principle of Free Trade. At all events, taking the quotations as he had read them, he subscribed at once to the doctrine that this was not a question of principle but only a question of expediency—a question which for certain purposes and under certain conditions might be inquired into with the object, not of imposing protective duties for the mere sake of protection, but in order to encourage the production of breadstuffs on the land of this kingdom. The other remedy he suggested was a reserve in State granaries. One objection advanced against this proposal was that it would cost too much. He submitted that if it were absolutely necessary to have a reserve of wheat in this country, the question of cost ought not to be an insuperable objection. He contended that it would not cost too much, while, so far as the first cost was concerned, it would not be a throwing away of money, but would simply be an investment. The money would be there in wheat instead of in gold. By the adoption of the system of elevators, which was so prevalent in America, the wheat could be stored away in bulk, could be turned over in the elevator inside of 24 hours, and could be kept ventilated, clean, and in wholesome condition. Wheat at the present time, he pointed out, was stored at Liverpool, Malta, and other places. Perhaps the most serious objection to this proposed remedy was that it would be an undue interference with trade. He did not himself see how it could unduly interfere with trade if done gradually and tentatively, and if it did it would be only for a very short time. The wheat required as a reserve would go to the granaries and would not affect the ordinary flow of wheat into the country nor interfere with the markets. He would illustrate his meaning by the example of a mill-dam on a river. The dam, when completed, provided a reserve of water when the river ran low, but in no way lessened or interfered with the flow of water to the sea. In the same way a national reserve of wheat would provide for a contingency, but, when complete, and, if always maintained, would not affect the ordinary flow of the wheat trade. He ventured to think he had made some kind of case in the direction of his Motion. The constituencies of this country, and particularly the industrial constituencies, held the Government they had returned to power responsible for an adequate Navy to guard our shores and preserve our markets. For the same reason they would hold the Government responsible for providing some security against the famine price of food in time of war. [*Cheers.*] He begged to move the Resolution.

*MR. ROBERT YERBURGH (Chester), in seconding the Resolution so ably and exhaustively moved by his hon. Friend, desired to make clear the position of himself and his hon. Friends on two points. In the first place this was not a class question in any degree, and if in any way it could be so regarded then he would venture to say it was a class question affecting above all the great industrial classes of the country; and, in that connection, *The Times*, in a leading article upon the rise in the price of bread last autumn, pointed out that there were classes not prepared for even the slightest increase in the price of bread. In the second place they did not come before the House as alarmists or panic-mongers. His hon. Friend had alluded to a number of representative bodies who had passed resolutions in the sense of the Motion before the House, but he had omitted to mention the London Chamber of Commerce, who, a few days ago, passed a similar resolution. He would mention another point which would be familiar to those who had studied this subject, and that was that the foreign Press, and notably the French and German Press, had been devoting particular attention to this feature in our defence; and writers of authority, whose names would be familiar to the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir C. Dilke) had pointed out that the most effectual way of dealing with us would be by fitting out a fleet of modern *Alabamas* to prey upon our commerce, and interfere with our food supplies. With regard to these food supplies, he pointed out as an interesting fact, he had worked out carefully that at the beginning of the century one person out of 14 of our population was dependent on foreign supplies; in the years of the Crimean war, 1854-5, one out of every seven was so dependent, and at the present time six out of every seven of our population depended on food supplies from abroad. Last year there was a slight increase in the acreage of land under wheat and a large increase in the yield, the harvest being largely in excess of the previous year, though not of preceding years. Taking into consideration the normal increase of our population, and assigning to that increase the same amount of wheat consumption as at present, in 1906 our increased population would require two and a quarter millions of quarters of wheat, and in 1916 a further increase of four and a-half millions of quarters; that was to say, that in 1916 our increased population would require more wheat to support them than was produced in the year of a short harvest, the year before last. As regards importation, he had often seen it stated that the lowest level of prices had been reached, and that we may in future look for an increase in prices that will make it worth while for our farmers to grow more wheat. If those who held that view would refer to the Reports of our representatives in Russia, in Argentina, and elsewhere, they would see that those Reports told of enormous tracts of land not yet brought under the plough, and from which wheat could be produced and imported into this country in enormously increased quantities. This disposed of the expectation of an increased supply from our own farmers. What would be our position under a great war? It was perfectly obvious that the very first thing that would happen would be an increase in the price of bread, an increase which would press hardly, as *The Times'* article to which he had alluded, pointed out, on large classes of our population. The next point would be—of course this was mere hypothesis—an attempt on the part of foreign speculators to create a "corner" in the wheat market, and in the next place wheat would be declared contraband of war. In 1794 we ourselves declared provisions contraband of war, making no distinction between provisions destined for military or civil consumption. The proposition was disputed by the United States, and we drew up a treaty with the United States, but the special point as to the conditions under which provisions should be declared contraband was left entirely untouched; all that was laid down was that they would be so declared under certain circumstances, but, to save the difficulties that might arise, parties who had their goods seized were to be indemnified. In the year 1885 France, then at war with China, declared rice contraband on the special ground that rice was necessary for the Chinese. Now rice was not more necessary to the Chinese than wheat for us, and judging from experience it might be assumed that in case of war France would declare wheat contraband of war. If anyone should be disposed to contest that point then surely the action of the allied Powers in relation to Crete would dispose of the argument. Provisions had been declared contraband when destined for the forces operating in the interior of the island. Here in England we possessed a Volunteer force scattered all over the country, and it was practically part of the civil population, and to make a distinction between the food destined for the civil population and for the Volunteers was absolutely impossible. Therefore, we must take it that wheat would be declared contraband of war, and at the commencement of hostilities we should have bread driven up to an alarming price, not very encouraging auspices under which to commence what might prove to be a life-and-death struggle. He would like to put this to his right hon. Friend who would reply on this Motion. From our wars with France from 1793 to 1812 or thereabouts we, after a protracted struggle, emerged victorious, and at that time the country was practically self-supporting; but in spite of that on two occasions certainly there were most serious riots in the country. History tells how serious were the disturbances, and how the Habeas Corpus Act had to be suspended, and the "Annual Register" for 1812 stated that riots in various parts of the country were caused by the increase in the price of provisions. There was one point his hon. Friend had not dealt with, and that was the position our Army and Navy would occupy in case of our going to war under these conditions. He had seen it stated that the Admiralty had arranged for a certain force of cruisers to be detached, whose duty it would be to protect our commerce and the importation of our food supplies; but the question he would like to put to the representative of the Admiralty was this, whether—in case of necessity, if we were self-supporting and not dependent on foreign food supplies—it would not be in the power of the Admiralty, supposing the question arose, to withdraw those cruisers from the protection of commerce for offensive operations against the enemy? He had read a very interesting speech by the Duke of Devonshire on the position of the Volunteers, in which he laid great stress on their value for home defence, and he said no opportunity should be lost of so defending a vital point as to give the Fleet liberty of action and that freedom which was essential for its proper use. Now, if this vital point of food supply was in some way attended to and placed beyond risk of danger or hazard of interference, would not the fleet get that further liberty of action upon which the Duke of Devonshire laid so much stress? The Army, Lord Wolseley held, would come into play in case of any disaster by storm or battle happening to our fleet. There were some hon. Gentlemen, no doubt, who held that if our fleet were lost all would be lost; but would the Army be able to operate with any efficiency if it had behind it a sullen, discontented population, ready to take to riot and pillage under the stress of hunger and fear of starvation? The Army could not hope to operate effectively, and there would be no resource but unconditional surrender and loss of empire. With the national food supplies secure the Army would be in a position to offer effective defence. That acknowledged authority on naval warfare, Captain Mahan, said in his book that if there was not that difference in personnel and population which would make one battle or campaign decisive, reserve strength must begin to tell, the organised reserve, the reserve of a seafaring population, the reserve of mechanical skill, the reserve of wealth. We had the three last, but should be unable to make use of our reserve strength, if dependent on foreign supplies we could not obtain, we should be forced to capitulate. His hon. Friend had pointed out that something like 51 per cent. of their wheat supply came from Russia and from the Balkan States. Russia, controlling, as everyone, he thought, must admit, the Dardanelles, had control of the whole of that wheat supply. That being so, what would be the position of this country with an alliance of France and Russia against them? A gentleman who was largely engaged in the wheat trade, and who formerly sat in that House—Mr. Harris—informed him that it would be perfectly possible for France, through her agents, within three weeks to buy "futures" in America to the extent of from 10 to 12 million quarters. So that they would have something like 51 per cent. in the hands of Russia, and this other amount in the hands of France, making altogether some 76 per cent. of the exports which would be controlled by those two Powers. He asked the House whether that was a position in which this country ought to allow itself to be placed? ["Hear, hear!"] He desired to say that he would never be a party to a proposal which would in any way tend to increase the food of the people, but he did not think that would be brought about by the suggestion of his hon. Friend for the establishment of a wheat reserve in granaries built by public funds. The cost which would be involved by the adoption of this proposal might be met by reimposing the old shilling registration duty upon wheat which was taken off by Mr. Lowe. It might be said that that was protection. His answer to that objection was that the duty was left on by Sir Robert Peel and that it remained on while the Liberal Party were in office some 16 years, during ten of which Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer, it being treated simply as a means of raising revenue. That duty would work out at between £1,000,000 and £1,200,000. It could not be said that this proposal of his would in any way raise the price of bread, for, from inquiries among the bakers, he understood it was the invariable custom of the trade not to add anything to the price of the loaf until wheat had gone up 5s. a quarter. It was his firm conviction that, if this country was not dependent on the foreigner for its bread supplies, in time of war their Navy would have that increased liberty of action which was so ardently desired by the Duke of Devonshire, that the Army would have its defensive power largely increased, and that, above all, it would add largely to the chance of preserving peace. Lord Dufferin had pointed out in most powerful language that, beyond all shadow of doubt, the stronger a country was the less danger there was of war, and he submitted to the House that, with a wheat reserve, their country must be stronger, and, therefore, was in less danger of war. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said the terms of the Motion were so vague and general, and, indeed, so inoffensive, that he had little objection to them. The proposition that the peculiar position in which this country stood as regarded its food supplies must be a source of certain anxiety to the Government, and that it was a matter which they should consider did not take them very far, because that consideration might take the form of an increased supply of cruisers, for example, or of a suggestion for insuring against war risks, or many other proposals. Therefore, if he rose, as he did, to rather strongly object to a great deal that had been said, it was not an objection to the terms of the Resolution so much as to the speeches which had been made in support of the Resolution. Those speeches had been largely concerned with a time of war, and it was to that side of the question that the Motion called the attention of the House. If it were not for that, this would be supposed by the House to be a Protectionist Motion in disguise. He certainly noticed a very strong flavour of protection in the speech of the mover. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not propose, however, to discuss what might lie behind the Motion so much as the grounds upon which the Motion itself was put forward. The hon. Mover began by telling the House that their wheat supply came chiefly from foreign, and possibly from hostile countries, and by those countries he meant particularly Russia and the United States. He also told the House that two-fifths of their wheat supply came through the Dardanelles—a long and most dangerous line of trade he admitted. But two-fifths of their trade did not come through the Dardanelles.

*Mr. SETON-KARR: I said one-fifth.

*Sir C. DILKE: The hon. Member who seconded him said 51 per cent.

*Mr. YERBURGH: Of wheat.

*Sir C. DILKE said he denied that statement altogether as a matter of fact. He did not admit either the figure two-fifths or even the correction.

*Mr. SETON-KARR: In the Statistical Abstract for 1895, the amount of wheat imported from Russia is given as nearly six million quarters.

*Sir C. DILKE: I absolutely admit the figures for 1895, but that was an exceptional year, and the figures are different to those for 20 years. The United States send us half the total importation of wheat into this country.

*Mr. YERBURGH: The figures I gave were taken from the Corn Year Book. According to that authority, for this last year 47,970,000 quarters was the total exports of wheat, and 51 per cent. of this came through the Dardanelles in 1895.

*Sir C. DILKE: Of course I accept the hon. Gentleman's statement with regard to the figures he has there. All I can say is that my right hon. Friend the Member for Thanet and I have two different sets of figures here. They don't agree, but they both agree sufficiently to absolutely contradict the statement just made.

*Mr. SETON-KARR: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but he has questioned a matter of fact which should be cleared up. I have the figures here for 1894 as well as for 1895. He said 1895 was an abnormal year, but as a matter of fact the total importation from Russia in 1895 was exceeded by the importation in 1894.

*Sir C. DILKE said that Russia now counted far less than formerly as a supply market for this country for wheat, and the United States sent the largest amount of wheat to this country. No doubt the trade with Southern Russia would be jeopardised in time of war, but if we could be fed from the United States, South America, Canada, India, and Australia, we were practically independent of a supply from Southern Russia. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for St. Helens said the great bulk of our wheat supply now came from foreign and possibly hostile countries, in which he doubtless included the United States, and he argued that the danger was not that the wheat was liable to capture in coming across the sea, but that those countries might prevent it coming out at all. Unless those countries were actually engaged in hostilities with us the interest they would have in feeding us in time of war would be so enormously great that they would let nothing interfere with their trade interests. The hon. Gentleman held out the prospect that in the event of war the Government would have to cope with bread riots, caused by the increase in the price of food. There would be an increase in certain foods, no doubt, but it must be remembered that, as regarded the working classes, it probably would be accompanied by a rise in wages, because the Army, Navy, and manufacturing departments of the country would be busily engaged. But even if there were no rise in wages there would be ways of guarding against the starvation of the working classes through high prices. The Government might take steps to prevent a rise of prices to the working classes. ["How?"] Of course there would not be enough food of one class for everybody—wheat for instance—but of certain classes of food there were great reserves. ["What classes?"] There were, for example, large stores of dried peas and lentils. [*A laugh.*] For a time there would be a certain pinch, but it would only concern certain classes of food here and there. If our ports were open at all there would be such a temptation to foreigners to pour food into the country that food would come in. The real question was whether we could be entirely blockaded and shut up. He admitted that we were highly vulnerable, and it was because we were so that he was in favour of large expenditure upon the defences of the Empire. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed, however, that in the event of us losing command of the sea our enemies, if they were numerous enough, would be much more likely to strike at our heart than to attempt to gradually starve us. It had been said that in time of war wheat would very likely be treated as contraband of war. It was true that in recent years articles of contraband had increased. We ourselves had been far from sufficiently careful upon this question, but he was willing to admit that the matter of contraband was largely one of the stronger side. If we had a great combination of Powers against us we must be prepared for them putting aside the works on international law written by the great international lawyers. It was, however, highly probable that the United States would be neutral in the event of such a great war as was anticipated, and the Powers against us would not be likely to take any step in respect to contraband which would be likely to bring the United States down upon them. The hon. Member for St. Helens made four suggestions. In the first place he proposed a commercial federation with our colonies. He could not see how in any comparatively brief course of time that would affect the question before the House. It was possible to conceive that advantages offered to our colonies might induce them to produce artifically in the course of a good many years more wheat than they did now, but it would take time for the change to operate, and the risks to this country were perhaps not so many years ahead as to give time for the change to be brought about. Besides, it was possible that any advantage we might gain by adopting the hon. Member's suggestion we might lose by discouraging the freer market in Southern Russia and other portions of the world. As to the second suggestion, he thought it was that there should be a bounty put on wheat grown at home. [*Dissent.*] Oh, no; the hon. Member did not specify, but what he suggested meant that or nothing. ["Hear, hear!"] Then he threw out the suggestion for the cultivation of waste land in the neighbourhood of London by pauper labour. He had some experience in this matter, and he was anxious to see the experiment settled; but he did not think the country would find that it had done much towards its wheat supply by the cultivation of London's waste lands by pauper labour. ["Hear, hear!"] He came to the third suggestion, and it was the most important, and it had been developed by the Member for Chester—public granaries in which wheat should be stored. Very little guidance was given to them in this matter, and the hon. Member who made the Motion gave them no information at all; he talked of a tentative trial of the system. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion distinctly told them that he would not be a party to the raising of the price of wheat, and he thought that all that was contemplated might be done by a shilling duty, which would not affect prices in any way. That was a matter on which, he was afraid, they could not agree. The hon. Member gave the House no figures at all to suggest how far this 1s. duty would carry them with a food supply in time of war. For his part he should be more hopeful if the same amount of money was spent on national defences. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member who seconded the Motion told the House he was no alarmist, but he put before them the danger as to covering the seas with *Alabamas*. As between the French plan of destroying this country by preying on their trade and the German view of invasion after command of the sea was lost, he adhered to the latter rather than to the former. He did not believe that starvation and suffocation would be so easy as a policy of invasion. The hon. Member said that if they were self-supporting their cruisers could be used as a striking force; but, if they were to lay up their cruisers simply because they were not wanted for protecting their food supplies, of course, the whole foreign trade would be destroyed, and one of the great purposes for which the Navy existed would fail. They would have to guard the trade route, not only to the Cape, but from the Cape to India, and from India to China; and the great length of the trade routes would prevent the withdrawing of the cruisers in time of war. The general view he took of the Motion was that it was somewhat vague and harmless, and he did not think that much good would come from carrying it

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said apparently his right hon. Friend who had just sat down would put all his eggs in one basket. He had not a word to say against any reasonable increase of the Navy which any responsible Government might think necessary, but if he were asked to rely absolutely on the Navy to protect the country and feed their population, he could not agree with his right hon. Friend. His right hon. Friend was like the commander of a garrison who relied solely on sorties, making no provision for feeding the garrison and the population. It was notorious that we often had not more than three or four weeks' supply of wheat or flour in the country. His right hon. Friend, however, said something about lentils and peas. [*Laughter.*] How long did he think this country would allow warlike operations to go on if they were driven to food of that kind? Then the right hon. Baronet said Paris held out some time, and they were told that at all events they had the example of Paris in the diet of rats. [*Laughter.*] They wanted to be in a position to give their people wholesome food. He was not going to say that help from outside should be dispensed with. What he suggested was that they should be in a position to rely largely on their resources at home; and, secondly, on those friendly elements of the Empire which would be anxious to send supplies. ["Hear, hear!"] They could get enough from Canada alone to feed them for 12 months. He joined his hon. Friends in deprecating any serious addition to the cost of living in England, but under a sliding scale a duty which ceased when the price reached, say, 40s. or thereabouts per quarter, could under no circumstances be a hardship to the people of this country. There were many people who went about the country saying that the imposition of a tax on corn would immediately result in famine prices for bread; and the mention of the fact that in 1812 corn stood at an average price of 126s. per quarter was always accompanied by denunciations of the selfish landowning class, who starved the poor by forcing up prices to that extraordinary point. But at that date and in the early days of the century, when prices were high, there was no duty save the shilling registration fee. In fact, when prices were highest duties were lowest. ["Hear, hear!"] He would point out also that the history of this and other countries showed that the imposition of a duty of any given amount by no means involved a rise in prices to a proportionate amount. But what would be the effect of a rise of 5s. in the price of corn on the daily expenses of the people? A full-grown man was capable of consuming 1lb. of bread per day. The rations served out to our troops were computed at that rate. An increase of 5s. in the selling price of wheat would affect the price of 1lb. of bread to the amount of one-half a farthing. Multiplying that amount by the number of days in the year, it would be found that every full-grown person would have his baker's bill increased by the sum of 3s. 9½d. in the whole course of the year; and yet they were constantly being told that a duty which would involve a rise of 5s. in the quarter of wheat would involve the starvation of the people. On the other hand, the duties which he would abolish on tea, coffee, cocoa, chicory, and dried fruits, articles which we could not produce at home, from which we raised a revenue of from four and a-half to five millions sterling a year, fell upon each individual consumer to the amount, speaking roughly, of 2s. 2½d. in the course of the year, and deducting that amount from the 3s. 9½d., they would find that the net loss to the people involved in the adoption of the system of protection which he advocated, would be only 1s. 7d. a year. He was sure that, under that system, the working classes would be in a position to confront without any serious alarm a possible increase in their baker's bill of a few shillings a year when balanced against a reduction in their grocer's bill, and accompanied by increased wages as the outcome of a restoration of agricultural prosperity. The only suggested alternative to the system he proposed was the establishment of State granaries. He presumed that meant that the State should buy large quantities of wheat, and so become a monopolist in the corn-dealing business of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] That was a vista which he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not view with any great equanimity. ["Hear, hear!"] The effect on our finances of the imposition of a duty should also be borne in mind. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, replying to a question on the subject last year, said the shilling duty, generally known as the registration fee, which was so unwisely and mischievously abolished by Mr. Lowe, would produce about £2,450,000 a year. A duty of 5s. would produce 12¼ millions, and a duty of 10s. would produce upwards of 24 millions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the late Government had declared that our present fiscal system would be unable to bear the strain that might be imposed upon it in the future; and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that our present fiscal system could not go on providing us with unlimited revenue. Therefore, those who deliberately excluded from the possibilities of the near future a return on a large scale to a system of indirect taxation were cutting themselves off from the only source of revenue that would be available in a time of real pressure in this country. He had disposed of the contention that, if the arrangements suggested were made, the population of the country would be called on to make any great sacrifice. He hoped the Government would not fail to have recourse to the only remedy which could prove efficacious, when they took practical measures to protect the country against dangers to its food supply.

Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) said that a very interesting discussion had been initiated. Although the question was one of an inadequate food supply, very little had been said by hon. Gentlemen opposite as to depressed agriculture. They were not nearly so keen on that point now as when the late Government was in office. The remedy which had been propounded by the right hon. Member for Thanet would not receive much sympathy from the poorer classes in the country; and he thought it was very impolitic to buoy up agriculturists with hopes that the old reign of protection would some day return. He wondered that among all the remedies suggested by hon. Gentlemen opposite, no mention had been made of the great remedy of the President of the Local Government Board—bimetallism. Protection, in the minds of a great many, meant not so much greater food supplies for the people as higher rents for the landlords. As had been said by the right hon. Member for Bodmin, the protectionists added a new phrase to the Lord's Prayer—"Give us this day our daily bread, but not too cheap." It had been asserted that bakers did not put up the price of bread till wheat had risen 5s. a quarter. He found that they put up the price directly there was even a prospect of a rise in wheat; but when wheat went down 5s. a quarter, the bakers did not reduce the price of bread. If protection were to be restored, it should not begin with the food of the people. It should begin with manufactured goods, and that was a long way off. In other countries protection had not proved a remedy against agricultural depression; and he believed that it was responsible for the great discontent of the poorer classes which was exhibited at the last Presidential Election in the United States. Whatever was to be said of agriculture, it must be admitted that the agricultural labourer—who could not be left out of account—had enormously improved his position under the system of free trade. Mr. Little, in a Report of the Labour Commission, declared that, by a quiet revolution, from one-third to one-quarter of the profits of the landlord and the farmer had been transferred to the labourer.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not keeping to the question before the House. The question of the effect of protection upon the agricultural labourer is not the question before the House.

Mr. LAMBERT said he wished to show that if we had to rely on increased home-production, we could not depend on protection to secure that result. The question of national granaries was argued in another place about two years ago, and did not receive much support. It was a reversion to the methods of the time of the Pharaohs. If they were established, they would have to hold some 10,000,000 quarters of wheat, and if the price of wheat fell considerably, the Exchequer would be involved in an enormous deficit. Moreover, the granaries would chiefly afford a paradise for rats. If the productive capacity of the land were to be increased, the excessive burdens on land, which were crippling agriculture, must be lightened. One farmer in Berkshire and Oxfordshire told the Agricultural Commission that the tenant farmers had been paying the rents out of capital so long that their possibilities of improving the methods and the capacity of the land were greatly reduced. None of the artificial remedies which had been suggested would improve the productive powers of the soil. To do that, we must take a leaf out of the book of our foreign competitors, teach the farmer to produce more cheaply, and cheapen the means of transport and communication. With such a strong Navy as we possessed, there could not be much danger of a blockade which would shut off our food supplies.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) dealing with the various remedies that had been suggested, said it appeared to be a serious thing to propose that a Minister of the Crown should become the biggest corn dealer in the country; and that the House of Commons should be turned into the bulls and bears of the Stock Exchange. The arrangement of public granaries in which reserves of four months' supplies should be kept, was one which would not commend itself to reasonable people. With regard to the idea of a bounty on wheat production, he held that the agricultural produce of this country was unfairly treated by reason of the fact that it contributes to Imperial and local burdens, while foreign and colonial imported wheat contributed nothing. He could not see why the foreigner should altogether escape his contribution so as to equalise competition and place foreign produce in home markets on the same footing as our own. As to commercial federation with the colonies, that was by itself no remedy at all, because he did not see that colonial produce was exposed to less risk than foreign produce. [*Cheers.*] Wheat from India or Australia would, in the event supposed, be under exactly the same risk as foreign wheat on the ocean. But he could understand commercial federation if it was associated with complete federation for defence. [*Cheers.*] If we were to enter into commercial federation with advantages to our colonies, to encourage them to grow wheat and other things to compete against our own farmers at home, he wanted to know how they were going to share in the burden and expense of protecting that sea-borne wheat upon the ocean? ["Hear, hear!"] He could not see any sense in such a policy unless it was accompanied by an undertaking on the part of the colony entering into the federation to bear the same.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I never advocated free importation of colonial produce, but simply preferential tariffs which would charge the colonists less than the foreigner.

*SIR J. COLOMB replied that the point they had to bear in mind was the risk of sea-going commerce in war, and if advantages were given to a colony to enable it to send produce in time of war, that colony was equally bound to share the responsibility and expense of the protection of its commerce coming to us. The time had really come to face this question of joint action and joint responsibility in the maintenance of the fleet, which was of equal value and necessity to the colony as to the mother country. He did not think the present state of things could long continue. Canada was a considerable mercantile power of the world in ships, and yet Canada contributed nothing whatever to the expense of the sea-going fleet which protected her ships. Such experience as we had showed that the country that was most powerful at sea did not, in the end, suffer so much. At the commencement of the war 1812-14 with the United States, the States had about 50 millions sterling of sea trade, and at the conclusion this had dwindled down to 4½ millions; while, on the other hand, we commenced that war with a sea-borne commerce of the value of 64 millions sterling, and at the conclusion it had risen to 87 millions. The economic problem resolved itself into a question of prices, and the question of prices was affected by war risk, and the war risk would be precisely a question of confidence in the Navy, and that should never be lost sight of. If we got into war to-morrow, of course there would be a rise in the price of bread. And not only would the price of food rise by reason of the war risk, but the price of all raw material would rise too. On the other hand, manufactures exported to foreign countries would increase in value and in price when placed on the foreign market, because the price of delivery at the foreign port would be enhanced. Thus would our competing power be seriously injured. The real question, he thought, was one of insurance with a Government guarantee. There was no department of the Government charged with considering all the economic questions involved, and he thought the time had come when there should be, perhaps associated with the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty some body of commercial men who could advise the Admiralty and the Government upon these matters.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, who was received with Ministerial cheers: There are two interesting peculiarities, among others, which mark the instructive Debate to which we have listened this evening. The first is that my hon. Friend has so contrived the terms of his Motion that he has made it a suitable text apparently for almost every Gentleman who wishes to agitate, and is in the habit of agitating some special views in the House—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—be those views what they may. My gallant Friend who has just sat down takes a strong view as to a colonial federation for the defence of the Empire, and very properly, and has given us some lengthy observations on that subject. The mover of the Motion takes a strong view on colonial federation for commercial purposes, and has brought forward that view. My right hon. Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet is a long-tried advocate of agricultural protection, and it is unnecessary to say that on this occasion he has not lost the opportunity of bringing forward that subject. [*Laughter.*] Then there is the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for the South Molton Division, who is never able to get up in this House without attacking the exorbitant rents of landlords, and, remote as that subject might at first seem to be from the food supply of the nation and the commercial defence of the Empire, he has succeeded, and at considerable length, in introducing that topic also into our Debate. [*Laughter.*] I think the House will feel that that peculiarity of the Debate necessarily precludes me, as speaking for the Government, from covering the whole field which has been covered by hon. Gentlemen—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—and I can only express my thankfulness that one topic, certainly as relevant to this subject as many which have been raised, and which has, I think, been mentioned, namely, that of bimetallism —[*laughter*]—has not been added to the numerous topics which it has been thought fit to deal with in our speeches to-night. The second peculiarity of the Motion is that, while in the terms which have been put on the Paper, it commands a universal assent—a chorus of assent in which I at all events mean to introduce no discordant note—the actual speakers when they came to put forward in detail their special views as to how the difficulties alluded to in the Resolution should be met, have expressed the most vehement divergence of opinion, a divergence of opinion not at all corresponding to the division of Parties, but making itself quite as plain among my Friends on this side of the House as among hon. Gentlemen opposite. For example, the Mover of the Motion expressed, among other things, a decided desire to see some form of bounty or protection extended to home-grown wheat; the Seconder of the Motion said that whatever else he would agree to, nothing in the world would make him agree to that. [*Laughter.*] My right hon. Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet made an able and excellent protectionist speech, but he was followed by other Gentlemen also on this side of the House, who pointed out that they certainly could not follow him, at all events, on those lines, in attempting to secure for this country a food supply in case of war. Passing from these irregularities of the Debate to the main arguments that have been advanced, perhaps I may begin with a very brief consideration of the two or three projects which have been put before us for dealing with this Question. On Protection I really have nothing to say. It is too large a question to discuss in detail, and stray references to what has fallen from my hon. Friends, or to arguments from the other side, would really conduce very little to elucidate the subject. I would only remind the House that, though it may be true, and I think it is true, that the apostles of Free Trade have too much elevated themselves into a sect professing a peculiar orthodoxy—["hear, hear!"]—and basing themselves upon certain perfectly sound abstract arguments, they have been too apt to found upon those abstract arguments rules of public policy which they sometimes assume are true to all nations, races, and times. Though I think they have erred in this excessive and abstract treatment of the subject, the broad political fact—I will not travel into economical fact—is that for various historical reasons, partly arising out of the enormously high price of bread which prevailed during the late war, partly out of the great controversy ending in the abolition of the Corn Laws, the masses of this country view with ineradicable prejudice the notion of any return to anything at all resembling the old Protective duties that used to be levied. [*Cheers.*] That is my own personal belief. I am not arguing the merits of this question; I am merely bringing before my hon. Friends, as well as hon. Gentlemen opposite, the fact which I think a little experience has probably persuaded them of, that it is perfectly useless to say to an agricultural labourer, for example, that the result of Free Trade is that the value of farms has gone down, and that the farmer as a result of losing his profits cannot give so much employment to agricultural labourers. That may be true; in many parts of the country I am convinced it is true—[Sir H. Vincent: "Hear, hear!"]—but, true or not, I venture to say that we have got to deal with political forces as we find them, and we must recognise that the historical prejudice, if you will, but the historical conviction in any case, which has been driven into the minds of the labouring classes of this country with regard to protection of food is so deeply ingrained in them that I do not believe my right hon. Friend's propaganda, however ably conducted, is likely to have very much effect upon their views. I pass from that to the plan which the seconder of this Motion has dwelt upon. He wants to see us spend a capital sum, which, together with the annual cost of maintaining this system, would impose, I imagine, on the Chancellor of the Exchequer an annual burden which my hon. Friend, I think, put at about £900,000 a year, but which I am afraid less sanguine calculators would put a great deal higher. The basis of my hon. Friend's calculation was that money could be borrowed at 2 per cent. I do not think, whatever the rate of interest may be at present, that any Chancellor of the Exchequer would venture to carry out a commercial undertaking involving a capital expenditure of some 20 millions of money, on the basis of being able to borrow that money at 2 per cent. But my hon. Friend altogether abstained from dealing with the difficulty attaching to this plan, quite apart from the financial difficulty which has been alluded to—namely, that if you are going to establish granaries in which a third of the annual consumption of the whole people is to be contained, you inevitably turn the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being into a great corn factor and corn dealer. ["Hear, hear!"] In so doing you would entirely alter the position of the administration at the head of the Government of this country. It is impossible that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be a buyer and seller on the prodigious scale implied by my hon. Friend's plan without making him interfere with prices, and without bringing down on his head an avalanche of criticism and of public feeling which even in quiet times would make his life anything but a happy one, and would make his position absolutely intolerable. The third plan proposed by the mover was that of a commercial Zollverein between England and her colonies, and for this purpose with the wheat-growing colonies. I am one of those who look with considerable longing towards some closer union—[*cheers*]—with our colonies, based, I should hope, both on commercial and on military considerations. I must confess, however, that I do not quite see how this proposal of the seconder of the Motion really touches the difficulty in which Great Britain finds herself at this moment. He did not clearly explain, in the first place, how this Zollverein was to increase the area of wheat production. When we are told by the hon. Member and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet that Canada has at this moment virgin soil for a sufficient area of wheat we should require without going to Russia or Argentina, I do not doubt the fact, but I do doubt that by any arrangement with Canada we could provide Canada with the population or the capital to convert vast areas of uncultivated plain into grain-producing territory. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why not?"] My hon. Friends do not suggest the methods by which the population can suddenly be transferred to Canada, by which she should be enabled to make this enormous addition to her wheat supply. I hope the time will come when this virgin soil may be used; but nothing has been suggested to bring it within the immediate range of practical politics. Those who advocate a Zollverein as a remedy for the difficulties forget from what cause our difficulties principally arise. They seem to assume that the difficulty of finding food for England in time of war arises from the fact that the nations which chiefly produce our food supply will refuse to allow it to leave their shores and come to ours. I admit that might be met by inducing our colonies, if they could be induced, to supply all the wheat we require. But is that danger a real one? I do not think so. The hon. Members appear to assume, though they have not distinctly said so, that there is to be an alliance of Russia and America against us. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Russia and France!"] Russia and France will not do it. I am now dealing with the argument that nations will refuse to supply us, and that we shall not be able to import. But that danger is not serious or imminent unless you can conceive America and Russia agreeing together in order to injure us and in order to destroy their most profitable source of exportation.

First Lord of the Treasury.

*MR. YERBURGH said that Russia and France had not been touched upon in the Debate, but he was advised by one of the great dealers that the present system of dealing in grain was largely in "futures," and in this case wheat might be withdrawn from our consumption.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Apart from the buying of "futures," we have nothing to fear that other nations will refuse to send us corn. But as to "futures," if France can buy "futures" England can do so as well. [*Cheers.*] While it would pay us to buy "futures" if we cannot get corn, it would not pay France to do so, because she does not want the corn. Thus France, being at war with us, would have her whole financial as well as military system strained to the utmost to buy corn she does not consume. That particular danger, arising from the special methods of dealing with corn found to prevail in America, is not one which it is necessary to provide against. I ought now to touch on the dangers, real or supposed—and I do not minimise them—from which those remedies are intended to protect us. What are they? First, there is the danger arising from bread riots and general disorder prevailing among the wage-earning classes of the community when they found the pinch of starvation in consequence of war. I do not think there is any distinction in this matter to be drawn between one class of the community and another. If this country goes to war depend upon it it will only go to war if the Government of the day feels it has behind it the sentiment of the people; and if this people are resolved to go to war I am confident that they are prepared to undergo the hardships entailed upon them by war. I do not believe that the immediate result of raising the price of grain would be to induce the general disorder which the hon. Gentleman anticipates. I admit that we have an experience, but it is an experience which may reassure us. I cannot imagine that any section of the population is likely to be put to a much greater strain than was the population of Lancashire during the time of the cotton famine. The population of Lancashire during the cotton famine never exhibited any of these disorderly symptoms of which my hon. Friend is afraid; but they so held themselves up as an example for all time of how patiently great misfortunes can be borne by the working classes of this country. [*Cheers.*] What is the second danger? It is that foreigners will refuse to send us their corn. I have dealt with that; but there remains what I believe is the real and great danger—not the danger of riots or of foreigners refusing to send corn in—but the impossibility we shall lie under, through the blockade of our coasts, of getting corn in. I do not wish to minimise that. I think it is a possible one. I will not argue whether food would be regarded as contraband of war. In that matter I associate myself with the views of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean when he laid it down that the laws of international warfare are determined in any particular case by the stronger party; and if in a war we were the weaker party, and if we could find no allies outside our shores having in this matter a common interest with ourselves, I admit that it might happen a combination of foreign Powers should declare it would be a contraband of war and should insist that neutrals should not carry it to our shores. Yes, but what would the neutrals say? [*Cheers.*] The case I put is that of the weaker party being ourselves, which I hope may not be the case; but if we are at war with Russia and France, what would be the attitude of the United States to any such declaration of international law as my hon. Friend fears? The United States have never admitted, in the first place, that food was contraband, even in cases where there have been no great Imperial interests to observe by maintaining the opposite doctrine. In this case their theoretical prepossessions would be stimulated by the strongest motives of personal interest. Half the exports from the United States are exports of breadstuffs to this country. To stop those exports—and by hypothesis this is necessary—would make the United States feel that they had a vital interest in associating themselves with us in combating this doctrine of international law. While I have fair confidence that we alone should be strong enough to meet any combination of Powers likely to be brought against us, I say that the United States and us in alliance are strong enough to meet any conceivable combination, even if that combination should include all the rest of the civilised world. [*Cheers.*] Therefore, I confess that I do not think it likely we shall suffer much from any declaration on that point addressed to us by European nations. Of course, in the final resort our security in this case depends on the Navy of the country. [*Cheers.*] If you have a Navy adequate to protect you, everybody will, I think, feel that though the price of bread may for the moment spring up to an alarming extent, though there might be difficulties and embarrassments, though the pinch will in the long run be severely felt, yet, if the Navy is adequate to the duties cast upon it, there need be no ultimate fear of being starved into submission by any combination which may be allied against us. Therefore, this Debate comes round to whether our Navy is or is not equal to the duties cast upon it. On that question it would be more for my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty than for me to speak. But he has already expressed in detail his views with so much clearness, and he so adequately represents the Government of which he is a Member, that really I have nothing to add to what he has said. But I frankly accept on my own behalf, and on behalf of the Government, the responsibility which the Resolution throws upon us. In the last resort, as I have said, it means responsibility for our Navy, and when my hon. Friend asks the House to lay down the proposition that the strength of our Navy, not merely for the purpose of defending our shores but our commerce—whether that commerce be commerce in food stuffs or other raw materials on which, only in a little less degree, we are dependent—rests with the Government, I heartily accept it. It is a matter which, in the words of the Motion, "demands the serious consideration of the Government," and that serious consideration it most certanly will have, and my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty is the last occupant of his great office who is likely to watch with otherwise than the keenest and most vigilant attention the naval construction and programme of other nations with whom—though far be the possibility of its ever happening—we might by some conceivable mischance be brought into collision. We recognise the necessity under which this country lies for having that Navy; we recognise that we, the Government, are responsible for the adequacy of that Navy, and the House is right in throwing upon us responsibility for that Navy; and in assenting to the Motion we only give another proof that it is a responsibility we do not fear and from which we have no desire to shrink. [*Cheers.*]

MR. W. ALLAN (Gateshead) said they had all listened with interest to the patriotic sentiments of the First Lord of the Treasury. The whole question lay in a nutshell. It was not a question of granaries or alliances with other nations, but whether in the event of war we could keep our highways on the sea open, so as to bring food into this country. It was a subject in which he had for some time taken an interest, and long ago he came to the conclusion that the only way to supply this country in the event of war was to have plenty of ships on the sea. Before other nations could establish a blockade of Britain, our fleets would have to be destroyed, and who would destroy them? During the time of the American War the *Alabama* swept the whole of the commerce of the United States from the sea. Should we be in that position in the event of war? If we sent vessels to America for breadstuffs they would have to be convoyed by fast-sailing cruisers. He was in great sympathy with the building of these cruisers, but the commercial aspect of the question was terrible when you looked at it, it was so large. The whole question rested on the Navy. It was the duty of the country to have a great number of fast cruisers, whose speed could keep up with merchant ships in going across to America or Argentina for foodstuffs. If they could not convoy merchant ships in this way, the latter would be captured. The money required for the Navy, although it might appear large, would increase from year to year, but we could not maintain the dignity of the country or feed the country during war unless we had a powerful Navy.

Motion put, and agreed to.

MONEY-LENDING.

Select Committee appointed to inquire into the alleged evils attending money-lending transactions at high rates of interest, or under oppressive conditions as to repayment, between the poorer classes and professional money lenders, and to report thereon.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Mr. Yerburgh.*)

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present:—

The House was Adjourned at Five Minutes before Eight of the Clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 7th April 1897.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE (MARKS) BILL.

Mr. WINGFIELD-DIGBY (Dorset, N.) moved, "That this Bill be now read a Second time." He said it would be in the recollection of the House that a Bill similar to the present, although in a somewhat different form, was brought forward last year, on which occasion the principle of the Measure was affirmed after debate by the large majority of three to one. On the occasion to which he referred the promoters of the Bill had had the advantage of having a speech made on behalf of the Government by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, whose absence that day on account of indisposition they must all regret. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman came down to the House last year, and with open arms accepted the principle of the Measure on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. In these circumstances he regarded the Government as pledged to the principle of the Bill now before the House. The present Measure was drawn upon the same lines as the Bill of last year, and, therefore, he need not go over the ground again which had been traversed last Session. On the previous occasion there was a manifest opinion in favour of the principle of the Bill then before the House, but in order to meet certain criticisms of the former Measure, a few alterations had been introduced into the present Bill, which, he thought, would get rid of all possible objections that might otherwise have been raised against the details of the Measure. He would like, in the first place, to point out that the present Bill was backed by a far larger number of hon. Members representing the opinions of the constituencies of the three divisions of the United Kingdom than had been responsible for the introduction of the Measure of last year. This was an indication that the principle of the Bill was approved by public opinion throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland. In the present Bill, the clause requiring labels to be attached to foreign produce was omitted, and it merely provided for marking carcases, hams and cheeses. He remembered that last year the minds of hon. Members seemed to be greatly exercised with regard to the difficulties of marking foreign produce. He, however, held in his hand a Consular Report from our representative in Denmark, which set forth exactly how carcases were stamped in Copenhagen. He understood that the same plan was about to be carried out in Holland and in various other countries, and in that case he could see no difficulty in carrying it out in this country. With regard to the marking of cheeses, he might refer the House to the system proposed by Lord Winchilsea to the British Farm Produce Association. The alterations which had been made in Clauses 4, 6 and 9 were merely for the purposes of drafting. In Clause 15 one or two changes had been effected for the purpose of meeting the criticisms which had been made upon the Bill of last year. The clause had also been extended so as to include the carcases of swine. By the same clause the definition of English, Scotch, and Irish meat as distinguished from foreign meat was given as meat killed within the United Kingdom, thus excluding frozen meat, the consumers of which were liable to cancer and other terrible diseases. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Expert medical authorities had asserted that it was impossible to trace cattle disease of any kind in frozen meat, and, therefore, the consumers of it were liable to eat diseased meat which was absolutely unfit for human consumption. The effect of this alteration would be to prevent this frozen meat being sold as English meat. He should like to call attention to the action of those who were associated for the purpose of bringing about the alteration in the law which was proposed to be effected by this Bill. At the last General Election the National Agricultural Union had inquired of all candidates for agricultural constituencies whether they were in favour of the principle of this Bill, which was intended to help agriculture. Almost all the candidates replied in the affirmative, and, therefore, there were a large number of the representatives of agricultural constituencies on both sides of the House who had obtained the agricultural vote on the strength of that declaration, and who were, therefore, distinctly and solemnly pledged to support this Measure. It had been objected by some hon. Members that the effect of the Bill would be to raise the price of foreign meat, and to lower that of English meat, because it would tend to show the superiority of the former; but as yet no evidence had come to his knowledge that would show that foreign meat was better than English meat. It was an undoubted fact that the meat consumers in this country were defrauded by having foreign meat palmed off upon them for English meat, and that at English prices. The second reason advanced by the grocers for their opposition to the Bill was—

> "That the poor classes, who buy meat in small quantities at the close of the week, when wages are paid, care very little whether it be English or imported meat, provided the price is low."

If the Bill were passed, foreign meat would have to be sold as foreign meat, and the poorer classes, if they preferred that article, would be able to get it cheaper than at present; but the mere fact that at most butchers' stalls meat was labelled "English" proved that there was a preference for the home-fed article. The third objection of the grocers was—

> "That the Bill, if passed, would not prevent fraud where either meat or cheese is sold, as is generally the case, in small quantities and portions to the working classes."

That, he thought, conceded the point of the opponents of the Bill, that this fraud did, in large part, exist. The fourth objection, and the only objection which applied to the grocers themselves, was—

> "That the carrying of such an Act would prove harassing to retail provision dealers, who would be liable to vexatious and frivolous prosecutions."

Prosecutions were carried out last year in the three towns of Oxford, Leamington, and Warwick, and the fines imposed were so small that they might well be considered frivolous. But one of the defendants sent round a story book advertisement explaining that it was only by an accident that a purchaser was supplied with a foreign ham instead of an English ham in his shop, and that he had taken precautions that no such accident should occur again, which showed that some good had resulted to consumers and producers from those prosecutions. Another objection of the grocers was "That this law would apply to 100,000 retailers in the United Kingdom." But he hoped the Bill would pass, and that the law would be applied to those retailers who desired to carry on a fraudulent trade. He hoped the Government, following up the support which they gave to the principle of the Bill last year, would give facilities this Session for the passing of the Measure into law. The Bill was based on the old English saying, "Honesty is the best policy," and what was morally right could not be politically wrong. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. F. B. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes) said the Bill might roughly be divided into two parts—one providing for the registration of dealers in foreign meat, and the other for the marking of foreign meat and cheese. When the Bill was before the House last year, little or no exception was taken to the registration clause; and he supposed that this year again the opposition to the Bill would be directed to the provisions for the identification of foreign meat. That part of the Bill was based on the excellent principle that the consumer was entitled to know what he was buying, and that it was fraud to sell to him foreign meat as British meat, and to charge him at the same time home-fed prices. ["Hear, hear!"] Two of the arguments advanced against the Bill last year were that it would entail an additional burden on the ratepayers, and would be very harassing to the butchers. But in the evidence given before the Lords' Committee, which had inquired into the whole subject, it was shown that no increase would be necessary in the staffs of local inspectors for the purpose of the Bill; and that the Butchers' Association gave unqualified approval to the proposition that carcases and hams should be marked to show their origin. It was also said that the Bill could bring no benefit to the farmers, as the public would always buy foreign meat in preference to British meat, because it was cheaper; but the fact that large quantities of foreign meat were admittedly sold as British meat showed that there was a decided preference for the home-fed article. Perhaps the most ridiculous argument advanced against the Bill last year was that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, who said, "this Bill was pure protection, just the same as a duty on corn."

Mr. BRYCE: I have the Report of "Hansard" before me, and I did not say what the hon. Member attributes to me. I said that the same arguments which were used in favour of the Bill might have been used in favour of a duty on corn.

Mr. MILDMAY: I have not misrepresented the substance of what the right hon. Gentleman said.

Mr. BRYCE: Yes: the hon. Member has done so.

Mr. MILDMAY said that the words used by the right hon. Gentleman were:—"The Bill is substantially a Measure of a protectionist character." [Mr. Bryce: "Hear, hear!"] Protection, in the political sense, meant protection to the producer at the expense of increased price to the consumer. This Bill would enable working men to get foreign meat at a lower price. ["Hear, hear!"] Supposing the butcher of his own free will did what the Bill would make obligatory, and said to his customers, "That is British meat, and this is foreign meat." Would that be giving an unfair advantage to the British farmer? The consumer surely had a right to get what he paid for; but the opponents of the Bill practically demanded that the middleman should be allowed to defraud the consumer to any extent. The right hon. Gentleman posed as the champion of Free Trade. He was rather the advocate of free fraud. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

Mr. BRYCE: I said that fraud was already sufficiently dealt with by the existing law; that the advocates of the Bill, if they did not agree in that opinion, should strengthen the provisions of the existing law; and that if the Bill had been specially directed against fraud, there might have been a case for its consideration. But the Bill was not so directed.

Mr. MILDMAY said that the whole argument for this Bill was that it was to do away with fraud. The position of the right hon. Gentleman argued a want of faith in the principles of free trade, which did not depend for their existence on imposture. ["Hear, hear!"] Those hon. Members were the real protectionists who wished to enable the middleman to continue the exaction of a first-class price for a second-class article. The British farmer did not ask for exceptional treatment, but merely for fair play, and he hoped that the Government would take a stronger attitude in relation to this Bill than they did in relation to the Bill of last year.

Mr. G. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) said that all the agricultural Members in his part of the world pledged themselves to the principle of this Bill at the last election. He regretted that, though the enormous majority of the Government was largely made up by the agricultural interest, the Motion for the rejection of the Bill came from the Government side of the House. Last year the Government tried to shelve the Measure by referring it to a Select Committee. He hoped they would give it a stronger support in the present year. He did not think that the patriotism of the British public was a considerable factor in this question, because the people would get the best meat they could at the cheapest price. But he supported the Bill because the farmers of North Devon believed that they produced the finest meat in the world. The Measure had not the least taint of protection, and if he thought that it would enhance the price of meat to the consumer, he would not support it. But as the British farmer had been exhorted to depend on his own efforts, he thought that he should be given fair play in meeting foreign competition. ["Hear, hear!"] The Report of the Select Committee gave many instances of foreign meat being sold as British meat, and at the price of British meat. While hoping that the Bill would be passed into law, he was sorry that the proposals were not so comprehensive as those of last year's Bill, which provided for the marking of all foreign meat, whether imported dead or alive. The effect of the present Measure would be much greater in respect to mutton than in respect to beef.

Mr. G. WHITELEY (Stockport) said that he came down to the House with a fairly open mind on this Bill, expecting to hear arguments in support of it which would weigh with him. But he had heard none, and he should vote against the Bill. The Measure would create the maximum amount of trouble and expense to the general community, to the retail tradesman, and to the local authorities, while giving the minimum amount of benefit to the consumer. This marking craze had gone far enough already, and in its present extent it had hardly proved beneficial. But if it were desirable and justifiable to develop this policy of marking meat and cheese, it must be extended to every product that came into the country to compete with our own products. There must be marking for fruit, vegetables, corn, flour, barley, and butter.

MR. WINGFIELD-DIGBY: The Government are pledged to legislation on that subject.

MR. G. WHITELEY said that in that case he should vote against the Government. Was every humble honest sausage that came into the country to be marked? They had only to carry this policy a little further to reach the *reductio ad absurdum*. They must mark a ham, but if they cut a ham in two then they need not mark it! If the consumer was to be properly protected, then, remembering the large number of people who took their food in hotels, every dish at the table d'hôte must be marked as to whether it came from abroad or not. He could not regard a Lords' Committee on a question of meat supply as quite an impartial authority. [HON. MEMBERS: "Why not?"] Why not? Because noblemen in the House of Lords were mostly concerned with the production of meat, and certainly they would hardly be regarded as a body as the best judges of calico imported into this country. Generally he was jealous of agricultural policy in the House of Commons. He spoke as a town Member. He thought the policy was dictated by motives of self-interest, though he did not blame hon. Members who promoted it, because he admitted he was animated by the same motives himself. How had this policy been developed during the present Parliament? Last year they had the Rating Act, which taxed the great tax-producing centres for the relief of county rates, while those centres were taxed twice or three times as much as the counties, and in many respects while their trade was worse. Then they had the Cattle Diseases Act, and now they had the present Bill for marking meat, which was against the interests of the general consumer. The sole idea of this policy might be summarised in this way, so far as the towns were concerned—increased taxes, restricted meat supply, annotated chops, and blue or green butter. [*Laughter.*] The consumers in this country wanted good meat and cheap, and they did not care where the meat came from. He would give the Bill his vehement opposition.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) thought that if the hon. Member had taken the trouble to read the Bill before he set himself to criticise it, the time of the House might have been saved. For his part, if he thought this was in any way a Measure of Protection, he should not support it. He supported it because it was a Measure of protection to the consumers, who surely ought to know what they ate and drank. He wished to know, however, what was the opinion of the Government upon the Bill, because at the present moment the Treasury Bench was absolutely tenantless, as far as the Presidents of the Departments interested were concerned.

MR. H. T. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's Burghs) explained that the President of the Board of Trade was absent from indisposition, while the President of the Board of Agriculture was detained by an important engagement elsewhere, and hoped to be present every minute.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said that, although he represented a county constituency which took a deal of interest in this question, he felt sure that if he were to canvass it, he would find that nine out of ten of his constituents strongly opposed legislation of this kind. He thought that anyone bringing in such a Measure, which would interfere with a particular trade, was bound to show a very strong case for it, in order to induce the House of Commons to support it. He confessed—although he had read most of the arguments advanced upon this subject (not having had the honour of hearing many of the speeches in regard to it)—that he could see nothing which this Bill would do, except harrass the trade and give very little advantage to the consumer. What he would ask the promoters of the Measure was, had the consumers of the country asked for protection of this kind? So far as he was able to judge, he was bound to say that they had given no expression of opinion on the Question.

Mr. MILDMAY, interrupting, said a large number of working men in great industrial centres had passed Resolutions in favour of legislation of this kind.

Sir JAMES JOICEY said the hon. Member might know of an odd case or two where that had been done, but he was certain that if the effect of this legislation were to be explained to any body of working men in this country, they would vote against the Measure. ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "No!"] He lived in a district where probably there were as many working men as in any other district, namely, on Tyneside, and was certain that they could not get a single meeting of any importance of the working classes which would be in favour of the Bill. Had the working classes ever made any complaints as to the quality of the meat they got because it was foreign? He was bound to say that in his judgment they had not. The working classes were as well able to spend money in purchasing good food as any other class. All they wanted was good meat. They did not care whether that meat was from abroad, or whether it was grown in this country. Therefore he was bound to say that in his judgment the Bill was altogether against the wishes of the working classes. The Bill, as had been admirably stated by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. G. Whiteley) would confer a maximum of disadvantage with a minimum of advantage, and if its operation were to be confined simply to carcases, it would do no good, and would not be carrying out the objects its supporters had in view. Besides, it would tend to increase the cost to the consumer, because, unless it did that, he did not see how it could have any effect whatever upon the producer. In his opinion it was the producer who was anxious to promote this legislation, and not the consumer. ["Hear, hear!"] This sort of legislation did not affect only this country. He had a considerable experience of foreign trade, and was bound to say that this kind of legislation was producing a very bad effect abroad. It was leading to retaliation, and it was irritating foreign countries. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "hear, hear!"] Yes, it was creating a bad feeling abroad against the British, and if this country persisted in legislation of the sort, it would undoubtedly bring about retaliation abroad. Many ways could be adopted abroad of injuring British trade without any serious effort. One was to cause a strong feeling of irritation to be produced among the traders abroad. This kind of legislation produced that irritation, and in his judgment it would do very much more mischief than the promoters of the Bill thought. He opposed the Bill because he did not believe it was in the interests of the consumers. He opposed it, too, because it was against the interests of the trade of this country, and also because he thought this sort of legislation tended towards Protection, and produced very great mischief, instead of good.

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somerset, W.) said he had addressed meetings all over the country during the last five years, and had found, especially on the part of agricultural labourers, that a Measure of this sort was most strongly advocated. Not the smallest evidence had been adduced in support of the assertion that it would increase the cost of meat to the consumer, nor of the allegation that it would produce irritation abroad. He would like to call the attention of the House to the Report of the Food Products Adulteration Committee in respect of cheese. Here was what the Report said:—

> "The adulteration of this article commonly takes one of two forms. Instead of being made of full milk, it is made either from skimmed milk without additions, or from skimmed milk to which lard, oleo oil, or some other foreign fat is added in compensation for the removal of the cream from the milk. . . . Your Committee are informed that large quantities of this imitation cheese are imported from abroad, chiefly from America. . . . The profits made from the sale of these cheeses, when they are fraudulently substituted for full milk cheeses, are said to be enormous, amounting to as much as 10s. per cwt."

The Committee further said that some means should be taken to prevent fraudulent sale of these imitation cheeses for full milk cheeses. In his evidence Mr. Lloyd said that—

> "imported cheese should be examined to make sure it is not filled cheese. At present they might label it Stilton, or they might label it Cheddar, or Cheshire."

MR. WHITELEY: Read that part of the Report which says that the view of the agricultural members is that margarine should be coloured either red or green. [*Laughter.*]

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD said that he did not see the point of that interruption. Cheese was very largely the food of the poorer classes. He did not think that hon. Members realised what was the immense amount of cheese imported into this country. Over 112,000 tons of cheese had been imported in 1896, at a value of £4,900,428, and much of it was undoubtedly adulterated. Bacon was also largely consumed by the working classes, the quantity imported in 1896 being 227,467 tons, of a value of £7,854,515. A large quantity of bacon was sent to this country from Denmark every year in a green state, and it was finally sold in England as "home-grown." That was a distinct fraud on the purchaser. This Bill was, therefore, purely a Measure of protection to the consumer. It was intended to prevent him from being robbed, and from having his pocket picked. The general evidence given before the Committee showed that the expense of working the Bill would be very small, and he thought that the framers of the Measure had done their best to meet the objections urged last year by the supporters of the butchers and others against marking small quantities of meat. The Bill had been widely discussed before the last General Election. It was asked for by every Chamber of Agriculture, by every farmers' club, and it was a Measure which inflicted no hardship on any honest tradesman. It would, on the other hand, give the British farmer all he asked for—fair play and no favour. ["Hear, hear!"]

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said that last year he supported the Bill, because he represented the largest cattle-feeding county in Scotland. His constituents were strongly in favour of some Measure of this kind, and at nearly every meeting he attended in the North of Scotland he was thoroughly "heckled" on this question, and he had been expected to give some kind of pledge in its favour. A certain amount of conflict between town and country in the matter was inevitable, but he contended that no attack was being made on the interests of the towns by this Measure, while, on the other hand, it would do good to the agricultural constituencies at present suffering from depression. There would be some trouble and expense in working the Bill, but, in his judgment, it was better than the Measure of last year, because the marking of produce was to be on the principle of wholesale, and not of retail. If they looked at the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Lords, he thought that a case had been made out for the Bill. While he did not think that frozen meat was as good as ordinary meat, he doubted whether its nutritious value was so much inferior as had been alleged. Frozen meat was not so good, so palatable, or so digestible, and, therefore, could not be put on the same plane as home-grown meat; but hon. Members went too far when they spoke of cancer and other diseases being produced by frozen meat. The only diseases among animals were pleuro-pneumonia—which was not communicated to the human subject—foot-and-mouth disease, and tuberculosis, which was as common in this country as anywhere else. He recognised the justice of the principle that people who preferred home-grown meat had the right to procure it without fraudulent imitation, and that here the farmers had a grievance. He was not enthusiastically in favour of the marking principle of the Bill, and judged that the framers of the Measure appeared to hold the same view, because the onus of a distinct or definite process of marking had been placed on the Board of Agriculture. He was glad that in this Bill there was no proposal for marking small pieces of meat. Carcases and large pieces were alone to be marked. The condition that everyone intending to sell foreign meat must obtain a special licence would possibly not prevent dishonest people from swindling, but it might have a deterrent effect, which was important. He failed, however, to see how a trader who was not licensed could be prevented from selling foreign meat. What test could be applied to determine whether his meat was foreign or British? He doubted greatly whether even an expert could tell the difference between a piece of first-class beef coming from abroad, which was not frozen, and a piece of British meat. If he were right in entertaining that doubt, of what avail would be inspection?

Chemistry would not help an inspector to detect the difference, nor would the microscope. Better means of satisfying purchasers that the article bought by them was British produce was supplied by the existence of agencies such as that which Lord Winchilsea had established. He was glad that he had been quite unable to sniff any protectionist taint in this legislation. [*Laughter.*] It was not proposed to give any sort of preference to home-grown produce. The only preference was to be that which a good thing deserved as compared with an inferior one, and the farmer and consumer were only to be protected against fraudulent imitation. He did not see how the Bill could raise the price of meat, except, perhaps, that of the highest class, and housekeepers would not object to pay a little more for prime Aberdeenshire beef, which might be described as the "champagne" of meats. All the farmers wanted was a fair field and no favour. In Aberdeenshire the bulk of the farmers were free traders, and all they asked was that something should be done to enable the public to discriminate between the false and the true. It had been suggested that legislation of this kind might injure the farmers, because the public might eventually come to prefer foreign to home meat. The farmers were quite ready to accept that risk. The evidence before the Royal Commission went to show that the average quality of the foreign meat was better than the second and third class of British meat. If that were the case, farmers, if they were wise, would try to breed none but the very best beasts, for only in that way could they hope to hold their own against foreign competition. Before he sat down, he wished to ask whether, if Canadian store cattle were again to come into this country, they would under this Bill be treated as foreign cattle, after having been fed and finished in Aberdeenshire? [*Cries of* "Certainly not!"] He was glad to hear that, and believing that the Bill, though open to improvement, embodied provisions which were likely to be useful to agriculture, he should vote for the Second Reading.

Sir ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead) said that, as he could not support the Bill, he must ask his hon. Friends to remember that election pledges given on one side were as binding as election pledges given on the other. However disagreeable it was to act against those with whom he was ordinarily associated, he was of course bound to fulfil the pledges he had given. He deprecated the suggestion that had been thrown out that there was any dividing line between the interests of town and country in this matter. He recognised with pleasure that the Measure was in some respects less open to criticism than its predecessor. In the Bill of last year cattle imported alive from America and Argentina, and killed at the port of disembarkation, were to be accounted foreign meat. Under the present Bill they were not to be so considered. A man did not become a horse because he was born in a stable, and cattle bred from British stores exported to other countries could not be considered foreign meat in any genealogical sense. The plan of marking small pieces of meat had now been abandoned, and it was proposed to mark large pieces only; but he did not see how this would protect the poor consumer, unless he was actually present when the meat was cut up. The richer consumer was able to protect himself, for he ought to be able to detect the difference in quality and flavour between frozen and British meat. The matter had been brought home to himself, because a butcher had supplied his household with meat which turned out to have been frozen—[*laughter*]—but the quality of the meat was soon detected. ["Hear, hear!"] He was afraid that a Measure of this sort would create a good deal of harassing inspection and interference, rather on Continental lines, with a very estimable class in this country, and he was therefore unable to support the Bill.

Mr. DENIS KILBRIDE (Galway, N.) denied that the question which was raised was one of protection *versus* free trade, or of town *versus* country; it was a question of fair and honest dealing as against fraudulent dealing. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not want the consumer to be defrauded. He did not see any of the representatives of Wales on the Benches on that side of the House, and yet if there was any part of the United Kingdom which was interested in legislation of this sort it was Wales. Anybody going through the City of London to-day would see mutton labelled as Welsh which really came from New Zealand or Argentina.

Mr. G. WHITELEY asked if any English mutton was labelled Welsh mutton?

Mr. KILBRIDE said he did not know whether any English mutton had the right to be labelled Welsh mutton. [*Laughter.*] The consumers did not know the extent to which they were defrauded by dishonest traders who sold foreign produce as home-grown. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no substance in the argument put forward by the hon. Member for Stockport that this legislation was not needed because the consumers had not made a strong demand for it. He was told by hon. Members opposite that foreign meat was as good as home-grown meat; but the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire, who he was sure was looked upon as an expert on this question, had declared on his professional reputation that foreign meat was not to be compared in quality with home-grown meat. He pointed out that the War Office had laid down in their regulations for the supply of meat to the troops that 60 per cent. of these supplies must be home-grown, and no contractor was allowed to provide the troops with more than 40 per cent. of foreign produce. If the opinion of the Government was that foreign meat was equal in nutritive quality to home-grown meat, why did they make this difference in regard to the meat supplied to the troops? The Financial Secretary to the War Office had said about a month ago that the Government were taking into consideration the exact percentage of the superiority of home-grown meat to foreign refrigerated meat, and were having the benefit of expert opinion upon the matter, so that they might differentiate between the two. He agreed that they could not mark chops, sausages, or small articles, but the Bill provided that anybody dealing in foreign meat should be registered, and should display over his shop a sign which communicated that fact to the public. It provided that foreign produce should be marked in the bulk, in order to safeguard the public against fraudulent dealers. When the carcases were marked, and some retail dealer went down to Tilbury Docks or the meat market, and bought a number of carcases of mutton branded as foreign produce, his customers would find out the fact that he was dealing in foreign produce. He would be the last man to support a Bill brought forward in the interests of the landlords and their rents, but this was not a Bill in favour of landlords; its object was to enable the English, Irish, Scotch and Welsh producer to get value for what he produced. It was said that the Bill would increase the price of meat. He denied this. It would not increase the price of meat of average quality. It would unquestionably increase the price of the superior article, which was a limited quantity, and always would be, because the demand would always exceed the supply, and the meat would always demand a good price. Under existing conditions the superior article was depreciated in value and price. The Bill would increase the price of 10 per cent. of the total supply, but decrease the price of the remaining 90 per cent. The consumers of the 10 per cent. could afford to pay a little extra. He supported this Bill because he was satisfied his own constituents, and Ireland as an agricultural country, suffered to a large extent by the fraudulent trade carried on not alone in London, but elsewhere. While the Bill dealt with cheese and English beef and mutton, it said nothing about other agricultural produce. It did not mention butter. A large percentage of butter consumed in this country was produced abroad, and those who served on the Committee on Food Adulteration knew the enormous amount of fraud which was perpetrated on English and Irish butter producers by foreign dealers. The Bill might not stop all this, but it was unquestionably a step in that direction. Still he did not think much practical good would be effected by piecemeal legislation of this kind. If Parliament desired to suppress fraudulent dealing in foreign meat, butter, and other agricultural products, the subject must be dealt with, not piecemeal, but comprehensively. Until that was done, no real good would come to the British or Irish producer, whom he knew hon. Members opposite desired to protect. ["Hear, hear!"]

On the return of Mr. Speaker, after the usual interval,

*Captain CHALONER (Westbury, Wilts), as the representative of an agricultural constituency, supported the principle of the Bill, believing it would be most beneficial to a very large number of people. So apparent did this seem to him that he thought it hardly necessary to defend the Bill against the flimsy and trivial arguments brought against it. In some cases the arguments were not against the present Bill, but against the Diseases of Animals Act, in reference to which the hon. Member for Stockport, digressing somewhat from the subject before the House, asserted that its effect had been to limit the importation of cattle. This statement was at variance with the actual fact—as shown in official Returns—that the importation of cattle from foreign countries had increased. Then the hon. Member proceeded to urge what were, from his point of view, powerful arguments, but they were powerful against an imaginary Bill, and did not apply against the provisions of the present Measure. In his constituency there were many thousands of the working classes other than those employed in agriculture, and who were consumers only in so far as the Bill would affect them. From their point of view, the Bill was equally worthy of support. As the law stood at present, the consumer had no absolute means of knowing that he was buying the best article when he paid the full market price for it, and this Bill offered that security against fraud. Consumers naturally desired to have that for which they paid, and if they had a well-justified preference for home productions, there should be a guarantee that they obtained what they required. Such a preference was well grounded. For example, take the article cheese. He was informed by witnesses whom he had every reason to trust that horrible ingredients entered into the composition of some foreign cheeses imported, and the knowledge of these would deter any consumer from eating such compounds. With the means of distinguishing between the foreign and home produce, the sale of the latter would enormously increase. A further consideration, from the consumers' point of view, was the area from which the produce came. Cheese might come from an area infected with some awful scourge in the shape of cattle disease, and the milk or other production in that area might be altogether unfit for human use. In Great Britain and Ireland articles of this nature were not allowed to be sold from an infected area, and the consumers had the protection of this prohibition. They had no reason whatever to know that a foreign article put into the market was not from an infected area, and one which would thereby prove a source of the greatest danger to the human body. He had up to the present only referred to the consumer. As regarded the producers, he thought their demand was a fair and right one. The producers said, we are prepared, and are able to produce, as good an article, if not a better article, than the foreigner, and when we put that good article into the market we expect the proper value to be paid for it, and not to be put into false and unfair competition with the foreign article, which is not equally good, and so lower the price of our article, which is a superior one, and increase the price of the foreign article, which is an inferior one. They had heard the bald statement made that this Bill would raise the price of the articles referred to in it in favour of the producer, but not one tittle of evidence had been given in proof of that assertion. ["Hear, hear!"] He firmly believed, and it was the impression of those who were supporters of the Bill, that so far from raising the price of meat or of cheese, it would rather tend to decrease the price on the average. He would appeal to the Government most strongly to redeem the pledges which they had made previous to the General Election. He admitted with gratitude the great amount of assistance the agricultural interest had already received from the Government, but he would remind them that the Bill presented to them an opportunity of fulfilling to a still greater extent those pledges which they made before they came into office. He appealed to Ministers not only to accept the principle, but to take this Bill under their wing. If they could not accept the Bill as it stood, he hoped they would, at any rate, give the House a pledge that they would bring forward as soon as possible a Bill dealing with the question, and thus do an act of justice both to the producer and to the consumer.

Mr. JOHN BRIGG (York, W.R., Keighley) said that, while not entirely in favour of the Bill, there were points in which it had been modified since last year to which he could give his cordial assent. Those modifications were very important. In the first place, the quality or character of the label was not now to be defined as was the case in last year's Bill. In the next place, the marking of small pieces of meat had been entirely done away with, and now only the carcase was to be marked. Another very important modification was that cattle, however foreign they might be outside the port of Liverpool, say, became British cattle directly they entered Birkenhead and were slaughtered there. He only trusted that if this Bill occupied the same position at the end of this Session as it did at the end of last Session, and it was introduced again another Session, other modifications might be made, and so gradually the whole proposal would disappear. He would like to say that, having come in contact with a very large amount of diseased meat which had been attempted to be passed upon the public by, he supposed he must say, the honest farmers and the honest butchers, quite as much, if not more, care and watching was required in their own trade as in the case of foreign trade. What were the objects of the Bill now before the House? He took it that the first object was to help the farmer. He should think the most material way of doing that would be to assist him in raising the price of the cattle he had got to sell. He would not say whether that was Protection or not; but that seemed to him one way in which they might benefit the farmers. He would say to those hon. Members who were interested in farming that he did not believe the importation of foreign meat would raise the price as some of them expected or believed. The cheaper imported meat was bought only by people who would not otherwise buy meat at all, and he did not believe that a large accession of cheap meat would affect the price of better class meat. A large number of people did not care whether the meat was foreign or not. It was with them a matter of whether the meat was cheap or not. If it was necessary to defend the public against buying foreign meat instead of home-grown meat, why not provide that, instead of foreign meat being marked, a butcher should put up the notice, "At this shop there is nothing but English meat sold"? He himself had been in butchers' shops, on one side of which there was foreign meat, and on the other side English meat, both classes being plainly and distinctly marked. Then there was the practical difficulty which he did not see how hon. Gentlemen opposite were going to get over, and that was why there should be this special solicitude on behalf of meat? Why should they not evince the same interest in regard to other things—foreign vegetables, for instance? ["Hear, hear!"] They might say they objected to one thing being sold as another thing. That might be so; but what was the position of a man who went into the market and asked for new potatoes? It was not necessary they should be marked. Again, a person might go into a draper's shop and purchase a piece of foreign ribbon under the belief it was Spitalfields made. He did not see why there should not be the same care in the case of one production as of another. ["Hear, hear!"] But there was no need to defend the people who were supposed to be taken in in this way. Those who were wealthy could defend themselves, and his knowledge of the working classes led him to the belief that they knew perfectly well the quality of the article they bought. There was another difficulty in respect to marking of goods. Take the case of cheese. Cheese was to be marked on the rind; but what was to become of a cheese of which that part of the rind on which the mark was was cut off? Again, there were now many dairies in the country largely engaged in the production of foreign kinds of cheese. Those cheeses would, no doubt, be sold as foreign. Why should they not be marked "Made in England"? ["Hear, hear!"] The whole tenor of the recent Debate on the Merchandise Marks Act was that we had gone too far in the direction of marking foreign goods, and that in doing so we were simply advertising the goods of those opposed to us. As to margarine, he believed there was a solicitor in London who had a distinct commission to prevent English farmers and others taking Danish margarine, mixing it with theirs, and then calling it Danish, because Danish was considered so much better. He asked the House to pause before they proceeded any further in the direction of marking goods. They were now asked to commit what he sincerely believed would be another mistake.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said he and his hon. Friends did not profess that the whole weight of argument was on their side, and that there were no flaws whatever in that which they advocated. They did, however, believe that the balance of argument was with them. He regretted that once more the hon. Member for Stockport had endeavoured to set town against country, and he hoped that when the time came that the hon. Member had to advocate urban interests, the attitude representatives of agricultural constituencies took towards him would be prompted by greater generosity than he had shown towards them. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Chester-le-Street Division had plainly stated that he had no sympathy with the English producer, while he had intense sympathy for the foreign producer. Tyneside was no doubt thickly populated by working classes, but he firmly believed that if the hon. Baronet expressed in that district such views as he had expressed here he would not find them as popular as he seemed to imagine they were. The hon. Member for Aberdeenshire had spoken of the lesser value of frozen meat. Some years ago a Committee inquired into the question of the provision of meat for Her Majesty's forces, and decided that the loss arising from frozen meat as compared with home-produced meat was 10 per cent. He had heard with some concern that his hon. Friend who had recently spoken was unable to find salvation owing to the peculiarities of his own constituents, and that he would not be able to afford that support which they expected. His hon. Friend was seeking refuge in a negative. It was within their power to introduce Amendments to meet his wishes. They had an interesting speech from the only Irish Member who had intervened. Reference had been made to frozen meat, to South American and Argentine beef. However keen they might be in regard to the large amount of beef consumed, they did not want to see an absolute fraud practised on the buyers in this country. He had some relatives who were engaged in the Argentine trade and the River Plate, and it was within his knowledge a year or two ago that a large concern was making a large income on choice Welsh and English mutton, of which every single head was imported direct from Argentina. That was not an uncommon case in which a direct fraud was being perpetrated on the consumer to the benefit of the producer. With that they could have no sympathy whatever. It would do mischief to the population of the country. He had listened with the utmost sympathy and attention to the speech made by the representative of a Wiltshire Division, and he was glad to know that in pressing home his arguments he was careful to recall to the recollection of the House and acknowledge the thoroughness with which the right hon. Gentleman had fulfilled the pledges given to them at the commencement of this Parliament. They all felt that there were seasons when they ought not to press their claims too closely; but at the same time he associated himself with the Bill of the hon. Member, and he hoped the Bill would be listened to with a sympathetic ear. Besides that point he could not help thinking there was a sort of echo of the Debate which they had yesterday. The Government had accepted the responsibility of giving the utmost attention to the food supply at home, and they acknowledged that this Bill might be of some benefit to those who were concerned with the production of meat. This was not in any sense a landlords' interest or a farmers' interest; it was quite as much the interest of the working man. It would benefit the consumers and producers, and he hoped that, perhaps moulded into a better form, the Bill would become law. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) said when this Bill was brought forward on a previous occasion, he took exception to certain of its provisions. He did not believe that it would raise prices. In his opinion the real danger of a Bill of this kind was that it might lead to a serious competition by enabling the consumer to discover how exceedingly good were both the animals and the cheeses that came into this country from abroad, and that the producers might find that the Measure introduced in their interest would in the long run do them no good at all. He admitted that some of the most objectionable features of the Bill had been removed, and if its scope were limited to the sellers of frozen meat he should be prepared to support it. He thought it was desirable that consumers should know that the meat had been frozen, but he did not know why they should include cheese when they did not touch butter or vegetables, or even such things as rabbits.

MR. THOMAS HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs) said he took it that the object of the Bill was that the consumer should obtain that which he demanded, and for which he was prepared to pay a price. There seemed to be in the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite a hope that if that principle were carried into effect some advantage would redound to agriculturists. He did not think there were many Members of the House who did not agree that that object was a very desirable one, or who would fail to sympathise with this hope. But the real question the House had to consider was, how far the Bill was likely to secure that object or to realise that hope. A great deal had been said about the inferiority of foreign produce. He could say, from personal experience, that there was produced in New Zealand mutton which, of course, came across frozen, but which, after it was thawed and properly hung, would be hard to beat by any mutton produced in the Highlands or in Wales. The Bill might have to some extent a beneficial operation on the prices of home produce. There were a great many people who were prepared to pay a slightly greater price for an article which was home-produced; but he questioned very much whether, in the long run, after an experience of the excellence of some of the foreign meat—the mutton from New Zealand, for instance—they would go on paying that higher price for the home articles. Therefore, in his opinion, the result of the Bill would be to greatly increase the importation of foreign products and at the same time lower the prices of home-produced commodities. It was perfectly true that if the Bill were passed purchasers of whole hams and carcases would be sure of getting home products if they desired them; but the working classes, who formed the great bulk of the community, bought their meat in small quantities, and for them the Bill would afford no protection whatever. The promoters of the Bill could effect their purpose by the law as it stood, or by some simpler procedure than that proposed in the Bill. He took it that if a purchaser demanded home-grown meat and got foreign meat the person who served him could be indicted for obtaining money under false pretences. Again, under the Food and Drugs Act those who sold as home-grown articles which were produced abroad could be prosecuted. Therefore there was no necessity for the expensive procedure which the promoters of the Bill were endeavouring to force upon the country. He had a sincere sympathy with agriculture, and if he could reasonably do anything to improve its condition, without doing a gross injustice to the rest of the community, he would be only too happy to do it. But they should take care that under an attempt—which sprang from the very best of motives—to do good to one class of the community great injury was not done to others. He could not support the Bill, first, because he did not believe it would have that good effect on agriculture which its promoters hoped; secondly, because it would be a very expensive Bill, and thirdly, because it would greatly harass trade throughout the country.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby) said he had to express his very great regret that the duty of stating the views of the Government in regard to the Bill fell to him, in consequence of the fact that the President of the Board of Trade, whose function it was to represent the Government on a Bill of this kind, was unfortunately ill and could not attend. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was one more added to the long list of those who had been good enough to express their profoundest sympathy, in touching accents, with the distressed agricultural interest, but who invariably found themselves in opposition to the particular remedy proposed. ["Hear, hear!"] He imagined that everybody in the House who had studied this question, or any other question connected with trade or agriculture, were agreed that they should prevent, by all means in their power, any fraud. He was quite sure also that those hon. Gentlemen who opposed the Bill did so because they believed either that it would not have the desired effect, or else that, while there might be a great deal of fraud, it was possible that the remedy proposed might be a worse evil than the evil which already existed. ["Hear, hear!"] Those were perfectly reasonable grounds of objection which must be dealt with. One thing must be admitted at the outset, and that was that there had been in this Debate, as in the Debate of last year, a marvellous unanimity of opinion in favour of the principle which underlay the Measure. ["Hear, hear!"] The claim made by the promoters of the Bill was that the traders who were engaged in the production of the food of the people in various forms—for the farmer was as much a trader as a man engaged in business in a town or city—were entitled to protection from fraud, and from injury to their trade in consequence of fraud, as much as any other traders in the community. ["Hear, hear!"] The farmers were exposed to competition from all parts of the world. That was part of our commercial system, long ago adopted, and which he doubted they should ever see changed. [*Opposition cheers.*] There was no doubt that the great majority of the people of this country believed that, whatever might be its effect upon sections of the community, an open, free market was the proper market for this country. [*Opposition cheers.*] But there was no one who would say it was right that the producers of articles grown in this country should have those articles brought into competition with articles grown abroad and sold as if they had been grown at home. ["Hear, hear!"] That was the object which this Bill had in view; and the question was whether the Bill was calculated to achieve that object, and, if not, whether Parliament could adopt some course which would check the undesirable practices aimed at. There was some justification for the view that this Bill might go too far in the imposition of penalties; but there was a general feeling that, if possible, fraud should be checked. He was bound to admit that he was not in entire agreement with his hon. Friends who had moved and seconded the Second Reading, or with the great body of the agricultural interest. In the investigations which he had to make in this matter he had not been able to satisfy himself that the fraudulent sale of foreign for British meat existed to such an extent as his hon. Friends believed. [*Opposition cheers.*] But his information placed him in rather a negative position. He did not believe that evidence amounting to positive proof could be produced on either side. But was the House to reject the Bill because it was insufficient, because it went too far, or because it was thought that the fraud aimed at, if it existed, could not be dealt with? The House was bound to bear in mind what took place last year, and the opinion which had been given expression to on this Bill. [*Cheers.*] Scotch, Irish and English Members of all shades of political opinion had, without pledging themselves to every detail, professed themselves supporters of the general principles of the Bill—that there should be some check on what they regarded as unfair and illegitimate competition. ["Hear, hear!"] All the criticisms on the Bill had been criticisms of detail and not of principle. It was urged that the effect of the Bill would be different from that which was intended. [*Opposition cheers.*] But hon. Gentlemen opposite arrived at that conclusion only after defining what the promoters of the Bill hoped to achieve. [*Cheers.*] That was a very easy way of attacking a Bill, and one which was not likely to defeat it. In Committee the question would be raised whether some of the clauses would not press with undue severity on one section of the community, and whether obligations were not imposed which might severely interfere with trade. It had been urged that the effect would be to raise the price of meat.

Mr. G. WHITELEY: English meat.

*Mr. LONG said that, on the other hand, objection had been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite on the ground that the Bill would not raise the price of meat. He thought there was some ground for believing that those who were engaged in selling meat did not object to it being made clear that what they sold was either English or foreign, as the case might be. In the Report of the House of Lords Committee it was stated that those butchers who at present dealt exclusively in home-grown meat would welcome the proposals as a guarantee to the public, because some butchers now found a difficulty in persuading their customers that they did not follow the common practice of selling foreign meat as English. The hon. Member for Stockport thought that any proposals of this kind would result in raising the price of home-grown meat. Last year, too, the right hon. Member for the Brightside

Division of Sheffield and the right hon. Member for Aberdeen contended that additional restrictions on the importation of meat would increase the price and decrease the supply. But it was a remarkable fact that, although for something like 30 years the restrictions on the importation of meat had been steadily increased, the supply had increased and the price had decreased just as steadily. [*Cheers.*]

MR. BRIGG: That is due to the increased facilities for shipping cattle.

*MR. LONG asked whether the hon. Member contended that there had been such increased facilities between 1895 and 1896 as to affect the price of meat? [*Cheers.*] This constant alarm about increased price was without a shadow of foundation. The policy of the Bill was either right or wrong. If it were wrong, it should be opposed on reasonable grounds, and not by these everlasting cries about increased price and inroads on the sacred policy of free trade, for which there was no justification. [*Cheers.*] The same objections were made by hon. Gentlemen to every Amendment of the law which was proposed in the interest of agriculture. Hon. Gentlemen opposite when criticising proposals connected with agricultural difficulties could never get away from the question of price. Their idea seemed to be that agriculturists were always wanting to drive up the price of the article they produced. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why not?"] He was neither asserting nor denying it; he was only referring to the very limited vision of hon. Members in regard to agricultural questions. [AN HON. MEMBER: "That is the whole point!"] Agricultural traders were no more limited in the view of their trade than were ordinary traders. Had it never occurred to hon. Members opposite that there was an object to be kept in view other than that of getting an increased price for the trader? Had it never occurred to them that there might be such a thing as an increased demand for the same article? What was alleged was that foreign meat was sold as English meat at the English price; it had never been alleged that the price of English meat had been driven down in the market. Agriculturists said they could grow as much meat as was practically wanted in this country, and the best class of meat; and all they asked was that it should be made perfectly clear that if a purchaser asked for home-grown meat he should have it. ["Hear, hear!"] Was that not a fair demand for the agriculturist to make? [AN HON. MEMBER: "What about cheese?" *and laughter.*] The same applied to cheese. The maker of cheese was entitled to ask that if cheese was sold as English it should have been made in England, and not in a foreign country. That was the whole demand made by those who supported the Bill, and it was not fair or just criticism to say that they were acting from selfish motives and desiring to raise the price of food. He did not suppose it would be possible to introduce any Bill, dealing in however remote a way with our commercial or agricultural industries, in which hon. Members opposite would not see some fatal form of Protection. The object of the Bill, no doubt, was to protect agricultural produce from fraud and unfair competition, but it was not protective in the ordinary economic sense. The Bill had been very much improved in its drafting as compared with the Bill of last year. He believed, however, some of the clauses would require most careful examination. Even those who were responsible for the Bill would not desire that either injustice should be done to or hardship inflicted upon traders who might unwittingly or unconsciously be guilty of offences which were created under it. But, because some of the details might be unsatisfactory, was the House to refuse altogether to consider the Bill further, and give it no chance of going further? That was not a view which commended itself to the Government. Their view was that, the principle of the Bill having been accepted in all quarters of the House, and been supported in the country by resolutions passed in large agricultural and other centres of industry, the House was bound to have regard to that general expression of opinion. The Government assented to the Second Reading last year on the condition that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. That proposal, on behalf of the Government, he was prepared to make again. Such a course would meet one of the most powerful arguments that had been urged against the Bill on this occasion, because evidence could be taken before the Committee from those who might be adversely affected as to the precise result of the clauses which imposed further obligations upon dealers, and in this way an impartial judgment might be arrived at.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said that if this Bill was likely to help the agricultural interest, which no doubt had suffered from severe depression, he should be disposed to give it a careful consideration, but he could not find that it would really do any service to agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman had avoided the specific criticism which had been bestowed on the Bill, and had not addressed himself to the question whether the provisions were or were not capable of being made effective by a Select Committee. The right hon. Gentleman said that the criticisms which had been made were criticisms of detail. That was true, but the Bill was all detail; and, if each of those details taken singly was either useless or impracticable, what then became of the details as a whole? The Bill consisted of three operative clauses. The first was the marking clause, the second the clause as to exposing for sale foreign meat or cheese as British, and the third clause was that requiring registration. The first of these clauses was entirely ineffective; the second was needless, because it was covered by the existing law; and the third was ineffective and would be vexatious. If he was right in these views, it was not worth while sending the Bill to a Select Committee. If the Government brought in a Bill to strengthen the law as to fraud in connection with this subject, he should be glad to support them. The first clause rested on the fallacy that British articles were necessarily better than foreign, and that the British consumer would necessarily prefer the home article even if it was much more expensive. A discussion on this point took place on the Merchandise Marks Act, and there it appeared that many hon. Members, who were even strong advocates of Protection, were in the habit of using without making inquiry foreign-made goods. He submitted that the same thing existed with regard to meat. He had been told that there were some kinds of foreign meat which were quite as good as English meat, that New Zealand lamb, for instance, was quite as good as English lamb. The difference in price, however, to the consumer was considerable. Suppose a purchaser went into a shop to buy some meat, and he found that the price of the one was 4½d. per lb. and the other 10½d. per lb. The difference in taste between the two was comparatively slight, perhaps inappreciable. Was it likely, therefore, that the purchaser would give 6d. per lb. more for the home-bred article? He thought not; and there was no reason to think that the marking of meat would induce the purchaser to prefer the dearer article where the difference in quality was almost imperceptible to the palate. It was on this ground that he thought the marking would be inoperative. So far as he could form an opinion, it appeared to him that the most probable result of the Bill would be to advertise foreign meat and to bring more and more to the knowledge of the consumer the fact that he could buy foreign meat much cheaper than he could buy British meat. It would therefore redound to the disadvantage of British meat. But the agriculturists might say that they were willing to take their chance of this. This was said by those who were in favour of the Merchandise Marks Act; and now, after four or five years' experience of that Act, these same persons came forward to ask for the repeal of the clause which they were so anxious to pass. Very probably there would be a similar repentance in connection with this Bill on the part of the agriculturists of this country. It was vexatious that they should always have to mark meat. The Bill lost in efficacy as compared with the Bill of last year, in asking that the whole carcase only should be marked, and the purchaser would not be better off under it. The carcase could be cut up in the back shop of the butcher, and the chances were that the portion of the meat sold would not be marked; so that the protection against fraud claimed for the marking provision would really be futile. The Bill, moreover, would require the appointment of inspectors and their payment. It would also throw the duty of prosecution upon them, and it would inevitably increase the expenses of the local authority and expose it to a great deal of troublesome pressure as to prosecutions. Another aspect of the matter was the effect the Bill would have on the colonies. He thought it was a pity that so many Bills should be brought forward in this Parliament which placed our colonies on the level of foreign countries and gave a contradiction to those professions which we were so fond of making at public dinners, that the colonies were just as dear to us as our own country. [*Cheers.*] The Bill passed by the Government excluding colonial cattle had been much resented in some of our colonies. Canada, for example, felt that we were doing rather an unkind thing in stopping her cattle from entering the United Kingdom for ever without giving her a chance of proving that the cattle were free from disease. But Parliament was here striking a blow at the dead meat trade of the colonies, and he thought the Bill ought rather to be called a Bill against colonial meat than one against foreign meat. As to whether the Bill could be worked from the point of view of inspection, he said it was admitted, in dealing with frozen and refrigerated meat, that even experts could not tell by any methods of technical skill or analysis the difference between refrigerated meat and the meat produced in this country. How then were the inspectors to proceed? They would be obliged to follow up the history of each piece of meat; and in what quarter was the inspector likely to obtain his evidence? He looked upon the Bill as a protectionist Measure, so far as it drew a sharp distinction between the articles produced at home and the articles produced abroad. It subjected the foreign articles to a variety of conditions and restrictions which tended to hamper trade, and which were not imposed on home-grown produce. It had been argued that the Bill was designed almost entirely to prevent fraud. He and his hon. Friends were willing to go as far as hon. Gentlemen opposite in their efforts to protect from fraud. But the law already provided means of dealing with cases of fraud. Sections 6 and 27 of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act provided that if a seller supplied an article which was different in nature, substance and quality from the article which the purchaser demanded, he should be guilty of misrepresentation and criminally liable; and that if an article was supplied with a label which misrepresented the nature of the article, the seller should also be liable. Speaking last year, the President of the Board of Trade said that if any man went into a butcher's shop and asked for meat and got a bill saying that the meat was English meat, and if it proved to be foreign meat the seller would be liable to penalties. There were, therefore, in the Act to which he had referred provisions against fraud which were certainly likely to be as efficacious as the rather vague provision against fraud contained in the 4th section of the present Measure. That section, therefore, did not carry the law any further. But if the Government should be advised that the provisions of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act were not sufficient, let them bring in a Bill to strengthen those provisions by defining, explaining and declaring them. A Bill of that kind would receive sympathy and support on his side of the House. He did not see anything in the Bill before the House which would be likely to improve the position of agriculturists, and he thought they ought to set their faces against the practice of passing Bills which they knew to be unworkable. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course he understood the position in which the Government found themselves. Governments, they knew, were obliged to do something to gratify every section of their supporters. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] Being in a position of "greater freedom and less responsibility," the Opposition were able to say exactly what they thought of this Measure. They did not believe that the Measure could be transformed into a good Bill by a Select Committee unless that Committee were empowered to change its character entirely by eliminating its most important provisions, and making it a Bill for the prevention of fraud. In the circumstances he did not see the use of reading the Bill a Second time, and suggested that the subject should be postponed until next year, by which time a more satisfactory Measure could be prepared.

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said he was inclined to view the Bill as a simple piece of protection, but that explanation of it had been repudiated by its supporters. He was of opinion, at any rate, that its object was to raise the price of British meat. In this country we could not do without foreign meat, and in urban constituencies it was idle to suppose that the working population could have the benefit of a meat diet except on the condition of a large importation from foreign sources. The greater part of the meat so imported was perfectly wholesome. The mutton from New Zealand, for example, was generally very wholesome food, and the cheap rate at which it could be sold was a great boon to the working classes. Hon. Members said they wanted to protect the public against fraud, and the Bill was presented to them as a noble attempt at legislation in the interests of honesty. But, if British meat was as superior to foreign meat as hon. Members alleged, why should it be necessary to label it? If a purchaser asked for pure butter and got a mixture of margarine and butter he called it fraud, but if a man asked for a leg of English mutton, and a leg of foreign mutton, equally good—which he could not tell from British meat—was sold to him, where did the fraud lie? [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] The Bill really did very little to protect the consumer. Whole carcases were to be marked "foreign," but people not in the trade never bought whole carcases, and upon joints and mutton chops there would be no mark to distinguish them from English meat. The chief results of the Bill would be the creation of a lot of new inspectors with a lot of new salaries, and the hampering and harassing of the trade. It would do no good, and he should vote against it.

Sir THOMAS CARMICHAEL (Edinburgh, Midlothian) supported the Bill, because he believed that its effect would be to increase the supply of cheap meat. The hon. Member for Aberdeenshire had told them that Aberdeenshire beef was the best. For his part he believed in Aberdeenshire cattle as a breed, but they could be reared satisfactorily elsewhere than in Aberdeenshire. He agreed that beef which was not Aberdeenshire beef ought not to be labelled and sold as such. The provision in the Bill for the registration of tradesmen who sold foreign meat was of considerable importance. He believed that foreign meat was frequently quite as good as British-fed meat. On behalf of his constituents, and of others in the country who wanted to buy good meat cheaply, he should certainly support this Bill, as he thought its first effect would be to lower the price of foreign meat. He did not believe it would raise the price of British meat, at any rate in the long run. The right hon. Member for South Aberdeen had told them that one effect of the Bill would be to advertise excellent foreign meat, and then went on to say that it would be a blow to the foreign meat trade. He could not see how those two statements were compatible.

Mr. BRYCE: I did not say that.

Mr. WINGFIELD-DIGBY: I beg to move "That the Question be now put."

*Mr. SPEAKER: This Bill was passed by a very large majority last Session, and a Motion to refer it to a Select Committee was defeated by the operation of the half-past Five o'clock rule. It has been very fully discussed this afternoon, and, therefore, I think I am justified in now accepting the Motion.

Question put accordingly, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

The House divided:—Ayes, 160; Noes, 91.—(Division List, No. 163.)

Bill read a Second time.

*Mr. LONG moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."

MR. LAMBERT declared that no further inquiry was necessary, and strongly protested against the Bill being shelved and the subject burked in the way proposed.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said the Committee to which the Bill would be sent was not a Committee of Inquiry.

MR. LAMBERT said the Minister of Agriculture had said further inquiry was necessary.

*MR. LONG: I said nothing of the kind. [*Ministerial laughter.*] I said there were points in some of the clauses of the Bill on which information should be obtained by the Committee to whom the Bill would be sent.

MR. LAMBERT said if he could get a seconder he would move that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade or Agriculture, that the farmers of this country might have this legislation instead of its being shelved.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. GEORGE MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid) moved, "That this Bill be now read a Second time." He said that one of the objects of the Bill was to do away with *ex officio* Guardians and replace them by elective Guardians. It also proposed to assimilate the Poor Law franchise to the Parliamentary franchise, and to do away with plural voting. The latter did not give satisfaction, and led to men being placed on Boards of Guardians who took no interest in the administration of the Poor Law, and only represented some particular section of the community. It further proposed that the term during which a Poor Law Guardian held office should be extended from one year to three years, one-third of the Board retiring each year. The Bill also dealt with Poor Law elections. As regarded *ex officio* Guardians a change was desirable. It had been found that *ex officio* Guardians did not attend the meetings except on certain occasions when appointments were to be made, and then the ordinary Guardian, who regularly attended the meetings, found himself outvoted one day in the year, when on ordinary days he found few associates to assist him in Poor Law work. *Ex officio* Guardians ought no longer to be on the Boards, and representatives of the ratepayers should take their place. He himself was a Poor Law and an *ex officio* Guardian, and by this Bill he proposed to abolish himself. [*A laugh.*] When he was an elected Guardian he realised that he had responsibility on his shoulders, and attended the meetings regularly, to guard, as far as he could, the spending of the money; but when he ceased to be an elected Guardian he felt he had no responsibility, and only made one attendance where before he would make ten. His own case illustrated his reasons for thinking that *ex officio* Guardians should be abolished. With regard to the Poor Law franchise, he thought that if a man had a vote for the election of a Member of Parliament to make laws for the whole kingdom, he ought to be qualified to vote for a Poor Law Guardian. The time had now arrived when it would be right and proper to do away with the fancy franchise of the Poor Law system, and extend it to all who possessed the Parliamentary franchise. The main features of the Bill were copied from the English Bill of 1894, and he did not see why what England and Scotland enjoyed should not be enjoyed by Ireland. The Bill was intended to shorten the time and lessen the expense connected with the operation of the Labourers' Acts. In some parts of the country they were found to work immense good, but in other parts their operation was obstructed. Something needed to be done to improve the deplorable condition of the labourers' cottages in many parts of

Ireland. There was nothing radical or revolutionary in this Bill. It was intended to simplify the Labourers' Acts, and make them workable where now they were practically a dead letter. The most important change in the Bill was that the Local Government Board was to be substituted for the Privy Council as the Court of Appeal for matters in dispute, and it was felt that the Local Government Board could deal with these with greater ease and less cost. He hoped the Government would not place any obstacles in the way of the Bill, but would assent to the Second Reading and then allow it to be sent to a Committee, so that it could be passed into law during the present Session.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) seconded the Motion. This, he said, was not a task which ought to have been left by the Government in the hands of a private Member. In view of the pledges they had repeatedly made in that House it was the duty of the Government, not only that Session, but long ago, to have introduced a Bill giving, in regard to the subjects dealt with in this Measure, the same rights to Irishmen as had now been conferred on Englishmen.

MR. SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) hoped the Government would give a Second Reading to the Bill, so that there might be an opportunity for its being fully discussed either before a Standing Committee or a Select Committee. It was quite true that the provisions in the Bill were merely copied from the English Measure, and he thought the House would agree with him that it was desirable, wherever it could be done, to assimilate as far as possible the law in England and Ireland. He urged the House to give them an opportunity of having the same law adopted in Ireland as that which was already enjoyed in England.

COLONEL WARING (Down, S.) proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." He said the object of the Bill was simply and solely to get rid of the only representation of property which was left upon public bodies in Ireland. The accusation which was brought against the *ex-officio* Guardians, that they had only attended on rare occasions, was absolutely without foundation. In many unions, no doubt, there were comparatively few attendances, and in some of the unions the manner in which they were treated on the Boards was sufficient to make their attendance upon such bodies no pleasant duty. ["Hear, hear!"] But in a large number of cases the *ex-officio* Guardians were some of the most valuable members of the Boards. They were constant attendants at the meetings, and they were invariably the largest ratepayers on the Boards to which they belonged. Under the system by which the Irish rates were divided between landlord and tenant, the *ex-officio* Guardian, where he was a landlord, was necessarily the largest ratepayer. It did not at all follow, however, that because Guardians were *ex-officio* they were landlords—in fact, a majority of the magistrates who had been appointed in that capacity in recent years had no connection with land at all. With regard to the extension of the franchise, it appeared to be proposed by the Bill that practically every person who was on the Parliamentary Register was to have a vote in the election of Guardians. But he would point out that a great many persons who had the Parliamentary franchise paid no rate whatever directly. The rates were invariably paid by the landlords, and therefore these men cared nothing whatever whether the rates were sixpence or six shillings—it was precisely the same to them. They might be told that the rates might be considered as paid in the rent, but the limit of the Cottier rents in Ireland was practically the same on which the landlord was bound to pay, and it was impossible for him to raise the rent in proportion to the Poor Rate, no matter how much he might be inclined to do so. He regarded the Bill as one of those perpetual and constant attacks on the representation of property in Ireland to which they had become accustomed, and an attempt to take out of the hands of those who paid the rates the management of the money which was raised, and to put it into the hands of the recipients of the rates which the propertied classes were obliged to contribute. The other portion of the Bill related to labourers' cottages. He had always been a supporter of the view that proper accommodation should be provided for the labourers—in fact, he was responsible for one of the most important Bills on the subject, which put it into the power of the labourers themselves to make applications to Boards of Guardians for the provision of cottages, instead of calling upon the ratepayers to do so. There were provisions by which the Local Government Board might move in this matter if the guardians had failed to do so. The Local Government Board, where there had been neglect on the part of Boards of Guardians, could send down an inspector who would conduct an inquiry, ascertain the necessity of the case, and compel the guardians to put the Act in force, if he came to the conclusion that it was requisite to do so. He would point out, in regard to what had been stated by the Mover of the Bill, that it was not the *ex-officio* Guardians who had resisted the building of labourers' cottages. In unions in the North of Ireland it was the elected Guardians who stood out firmly and determinedly against building cottages where they were required. This Bill dealt with a subject which, he thought, ought to be dealt with only by a Bill drawn up, supported and brought in by the responsible Government of the country; it was not a Bill to be tinkered at by amateurs. The very provisions of the Bill which related to this question of labourers' cottages showed that it had not been drawn with that degree of consideration requisite for a Measure of this kind. Another reason why he objected to the labourers' portion of the Bill was the very point which had been made in support of it by its Mover, and that was that it transferred from the Lord Lieutenant in Council to the Local Government Board the power to assent to the schemes for building labourers' cottages. He did not think it came at all within the scope of the Local Government Board to give compulsory powers to acquire land for purposes of this kind, and in many parts of the country this power had been used and had been abused in a way which did not commend itself at all to those best acquainted with the working of the Labourers' Acts in Ireland. The whole Bill required a great deal of consideration, and he was not at all prepared to assent to its Second Reading at that hour, when only about half-an-hour had been given to talk the matter over. He, therefore, moved that the Bill be read a Second time that day six months.

MR. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) seconded the Amendment.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) pointed out that there was no provision whatsoever in the Bill for the representation of the minority who were concerned in the paying of the rates, and was speaking at half-past Five o'clock, when,

The Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

TEIND COURT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 5th May.

LABOUR BUREAUX BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MILITIA BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 30th April.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 3rd May.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (29th January) further adjourned till Tomorrow.

VEHICLES (LIGHTS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 11th May.

BUILDING FEUS AND LEASES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 3rd May.

RATING OF MACHINERY SUSPENSORY BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 13th May.

SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 29th April.

APPOINTMENT OF HIGH SHERIFFS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 4th May.

COUNTY SECRETARIES' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 27th April.

ELECTION PETITIONS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 28th April.

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 3rd May.

TITHE REDEMPTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 28th April.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WINE AND BEERHOUSE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

POLICE PENSIONS AND SERVICE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 26th April.

POLICE APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 4th May.

SUCCESSION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 4th May.

MERSEY CHANNELS BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

APPEAL IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 27th April.

CANALS PROTECTION (LONDON) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 30th April.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 28th April.

NAVY AND MARINES (WILLS) ACT (1865) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

REGISTRATION OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 28th April.

HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 29th April.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee (24th March) further adjourned till To-morrow.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 28th April.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 28th April.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 6th May.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTION.

IDIOTS INSTITUTIONS (EXEMPTION FROM RATES).

Bill to exempt from Poor and other Local Rates all Registered Institutions for the care, training, and education of Idiots and Imbeciles, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Round, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Allison, Sir William Houldsworth, and Sir Blundell Maple; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday 13th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 193.]

House Adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Six o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 8th April 1897.

EARL OF KINGSTON (CLAIM TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND).

Ordered and directed, that a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Earl of Kingston to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him, the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland; and it is hereby also Ordered, that the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

Crays Gas.

Dunbarton County Buildings.

Edinburgh American Land Mortgage Company, Limited.

Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 1).

Military Lands Act.

Military Works.

South Metropolitan Gas.

South Yorkshire Junction Railway.

Thompson's Divorce.

Voluntary Schools.

The Lords' Commissioners were the Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury), the Lord Privy Seal (Viscount Cross), and the Earl of Hopetoun (Paymaster General).

NEW PEER.

Charles George Viscount Cobham and Baron Cobham, having succeeded to those titles on the death of Richard Plantagenet Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Viscount Cobham, Baron Cobham, &c., by virtue of a special remainder contained in a patent bearing date the 23rd May in the fourth year of the reign of His Majesty King George the First—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

SAT FIRST.

Lord Hay (*E. Kinnoul*), sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, that Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.

PREFERENTIAL PAYMENTS IN BANKRUPTCY ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee (according to Order); reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

BELMULLET AND ACHILL (STEAM COMMUNICATION).

*The Earl of ARRAN asked Her Majesty's Government whether there would be any objection to lay on the Table of the House copies of the Reports in consequence of which it has been decided to establish a line of steamers between Belmullet and the Island of Achill? His Lordship said that in rising to ask the question he would like to say a few words in explanation of his reason for doing so. It was proposed by the Government, according to what fell from the Chief Secretary for Ireland in another place last Friday, to establish a line of steamers between Belmullet and the Island of Achill on the west coast of Ireland. For those of their Lordships who might not have studied the geography of this part of Her Majesty's dominions lately, he should like to say that Belmullet was the chief town of perhaps the wildest and most backward part of the County of Mayo. It had 600 inhabitants, and was distant 35 miles from Ballina, and 20 from Achill Sound, at both of which places there were stations on the Midland Great Western system. In another place Mr. T. M. Healy compared the establishment of this line of steamers to laying down a telephone between purgatory and another and warmer place. He himself had not had the advantage of a sojourn in either place; but if purgatory was anything like Achill, he wished he were a Roman Catholic, because if so, he should have a stay there for some time, for he never saw a more beautiful place, or one more worthy of a visit from any of their Lordships who might be disposed to go there during their autumn tours. There had been considerable agitation in that part of the world for the establishment of a railway to connect Belmullet and the surrounding district of Erris with the Midland Great Western system, and to develop the cattle trade, which was considerable, if not the only trade of the district. Various schemes had been propounded, and he had hoped that some of the money voted by Parliament for the development of the backward parts of Ireland would have been spent in this part of the world. In that hope he had been much disappointed. Various schemes had been supported and various opinions held as to the best route that the railway could take from the peculiar conformation of the ground. There were three lines which could serve Belmullet. Any one of them, while also serving one part of the surrounding district, would leave the greater portion out in the cold. He had had interviews with persons holding each of the opinions, but he had never heard an alternative route advocated in the establishment of steamers. Being an old public servant himself, he had great belief in the intelligence and sagacity of those employed in the public service, and he felt it was likely that those who had reported in favour of the steamers might have discovered some industry which would warrant public money being spent on this line of steamers. They were all much surprised at it, and they could not conceive what particular industry that existed could be benefited. The only trade was the cattle trade, and it was not likely that men wishing to sell their cattle and send them to the other coast parts of Ireland would ship them by one of the roughest passages in the United Kingdom, which was for the most part exposed to the full blast of the Atlantic gales, which, in winter, were excessively tempestuous, and there could be, therefore, no benefit derived by shortening the route. For that reason he begged to ask whether the report upon which this line of steamers was to be established could be produced, in order that they might see what reason—as no one could discover any—existed to warrant it?

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (VISCOUNT CROSS): I canot enter into the merits of the question, but in the absence of Lord Ranfurly, I have been requested to give the following answer on behalf of the Irish Government—That the establishment of a line of steamers between Belmullet and Achill was not based on reports, but was decided upon after full inquiry had been made on the spot into all the circumstances. There are, therefore, no papers which could be laid on the Table.

*THE EARL OF ARRAN said he was afraid this was not a satisfactory answer, and would hardly exonerate the Government from spending money in a way that could do no possible good of any kind in the district.

LAND COMMISSION.

LORD CASTLETOWN asked Her Majesty's Government (1) whether, having regard to the decision by the Court of Appeal in Ireland in the case of "Cope *v.* Cunningham," the Land Commissioners were entitled to continue to treat re-hearings as if they were merely appeals; (2) whether Assistant Commissioners appointed by the Lord Lieutenant under Section 43 of the Land Act, 1881, were and could be considered as "independent valuers" within the meaning of Section 48, Sub-section 4, of the said Act; and whether, when a land case was coming up for rehearing, the Land Commission had power to refer the order and report of the Sub-Commissioners who adjudicated on the said case to two Assistant Commissioners to report to them, as if they were a Court of Appeal from their own colleagues, as to what order the Land Commission should make on the re-hearing.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: The first paragraph of the question appears to have been put under some misapprehension. The Court of Appeal, in the case of "Cunningham *v.* Cope" referred to, decided that the provisions of Sub-section (1) of Section 1 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896, are mandatory upon the Land Commission when re-hearing fair-rent applications upon the appeal of the person aggrieved, and that the schedule must be filled up in all cases. Since that decision was communicated to them, the Land Commission have complied with the law as stated by the Court of Appeal in every case. The power given by Section 48 (4) of the Act of 1881 to appoint an independent valuer is a general power conferred upon the Land Commission, and one which they may exercise or not as they see fit in relation to any question as to any holding arising under the Act. The section referred to in the question is a transcript of a similar provision in Section 37 (*b*) of the same Act. The Land Commission consider that without question they have power to obtain reports from Assistant Commissioners, others than those whose decisions have been appealed from, for their assistance and consideration in any case where the person aggrieved by the Order of the Sub-Commission requires such case to be re-heard by the Land Commission. The final passage of this paragraph is also based upon a misapprehension. The Land Commission—and not the Assistant Commissioners, who report —fix the rents. The Land Commission consider it necessary to refer the schedule recorded by the Sub-Commission to the Court valuers, in order that they may know what improvements have been proved before and allowed for by the Sub-Commission, and in order that they may report upon what modifications (if any) ought to be made in the particulars recorded in the schedule.

LORD CASTLETOWN said that, if he might respectfully say so, the answer was not so clear or satisfactory as he could wish. He proposed to put a further question, and hoped to obtain an answer either from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack or from the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

House Adjourned at Twenty Minutes before Five o'Clock, to Monday, the 3rd of May next, a Quarter past Four o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 8th April 1897.

COMMISSION.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners. The House went, and, being returned,—

MR. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to several Bills which had passed both Houses. (For list, see proceedings of House of Lords of this date.)

LONDON WATER COMPANIES BILLS.

The following Notices of Motions had been given:—

LONDON WATER COMPANIES' BILLS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): That a Select Committee of Nine Members be appointed, Four to be nominated by the House and Five by the Committee of Selection, to whom all Bills promoted in the present Session by the London Water Companies shall be committed.

That all Petitions presented against the said Bills, within the time limited by the Standing Orders, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their counsel, agents, or witnesses, be heard on their Petitions against the Bills, if they think fit, and counsel heard in support of the said Bills against such Petitions.

That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

That Five be the quorum of the Committee.

That it be an Instruction to the Committee to make provision in each of the Bills that, if the undertaking of the Company be purchased within seven years from the passing of the Act by any public body or trustees under statutory authority, the cost of purchase shall not be increased by advantages conferred on the Company by or resulting from the passing of the Act. (*By Order.*)

EAST LONDON WATER BILL.

Mr. JAMES STUART: That the Order of 26th February for the committal of this Bill be discharged, and that the Bill be committed to the Select Committee on the London Water Companies Bills. (*By Order.*)

NEW RIVER COMPANY BILL.

Mr. JAMES STUART: That the Order of 15th February for the committal of this Bill be discharged, and that the Bill be committed to the Select Committee on the London Water Companies Bills. (*By Order.*)

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said that he desired, with the permission of the House, to say that, in consideration of the London Water Companies withdrawing Clause 5 of their Bill [Power to take, divert, etc., waters and make subsidiary works] and substituting one that would meet the views of the hon. Member for Hoxton and the London County Council, the House would be put to no further trouble in the matter. Now that the hon. Member and the County Council were convinced of the *bonâ fides* of the East London Water Company, he hoped that they would in the future assist the Company instead of opposing it.

MR. JAMES STUART said that after the statement made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and after the action of the East London Water Company, he did not propose to take any further action in the matter as regarded that Company.

QUESTIONS.

MOMBASA RAILWAY.

COLONEL WILLIAMS (Dorset, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state what progress is being made with the Uganda Railway, and if any portion of it is already open for traffic; and when it is anticipated that the whole line will be finished?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The rails are laid, but traffic is not as yet opened, up to the forty-fifth mile. The line has been staked out to the eightieth mile, and the general alignment is fixed for nearly four hundred miles. There has been a good deal of ill-health among the labourers and staff, and an exceptionally wet season has also been experienced. But these difficulties are now being surmounted. It is still too early, however, to venture upon any precise forecast of the completion of the entire line, which will be over six hundred and seventy miles in length.

GLEBE OF KINTAIL (FORESHORE).

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Crown has the right to the foreshore of the Glebe of Kintail, and thence to the head of Loch Duich; if not, will he state to whom the right belongs?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): As the hon. Member is aware, the Crown is proprietor of the whole foreshore of the Kingdom of Scotland, except in so far as it has passed by express disposition or prescriptive possession into the hands of private proprietors. I have no information about the locality in question; and I am not able, nor should I in any case be willing, to advise the hon. Member as to the ownership of rights over a specified territory, seeing that the rights of the public in regard to the foreshore are the same whether it be the property of the Crown or of a subject.

POLICE (COUNTIES, SCOTLAND).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the reason why the police constables in the counties of Scotland have been increased from 953 in 1864, or one constable to every 1,925 inhabitants, to 1,731 in 1896, or one constable to 1,209 inhabitants; and whether, in view of the low percentage of crime in Scotland, he considers this increased burden on the ratepayers justifiable?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The present strength of the County Constabulary in Scotland, made up to 31st December 1896, is 1,667, or one constable to 1,260 of the population. The increase in the numbers of each County Police Force is made on the recommendation of the Standing Joint Committee; and, having regard to the many duties thrown upon the police by new Acts of Parliament and otherwise, there seems no reason to think that the numbers have been unduly increased.

INSPECTOR OF POOR (KILTEARN, ROSS-SHIRE).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the recent appointment of Mr. Mackintosh as Inspector of Poor for the Parish of Kiltearn, Ross-shire, has caused great dissatisfaction to several members of the Parish Council and inhabitants of the district; whether he is aware that at the meeting of the Council for the election of an Inspector of Poor, Mr. Mackintosh resigned his seat on the Council, and in five minutes later he was proposed and elected to the vacant inspectorship, regardless of the fact that the Standing Order had not been suspended; that Mr. Mackintosh was elected by the casting vote of the chairman, Sir Hector Munro; and that the chairman subsequently withheld from the Council correspondence which had passed between himself as chairman and the Local Government Board for Scotland in regard to the appointment; will he explain why the Local Government Board for Scotland decline to furnish the dissenting Councillors with a copy of the chairman's letters to the Board relative to the appointment; and whether the correspondence on the subject in possession of the Local Government Board for Scotland will be laid upon the Table of the House?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I am aware that certain members of the Parish Council of Kiltearn are dissatisfied with the election of Mr. Mackintosh as Inspector of Poor; but on the other hand, the General Superintendent of the Local Government Board reports favourably of his qualifications. It is possible that the election may have been irregularly conducted, but both this and the proceedings of the chairman can only be reviewed in a court of law. The Secretary for Scotland has read the papers and approves of the action of the Local Government Board, and he does not consider that the public interest would be served by laying the correspondence on the Table of the House.

TELEGRAPH OFFICES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state how many of the 2,932 telegraph offices in the United Kingdom at the time of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State were situated in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively; and whether he will state the number of telegraph offices of all kinds in each of the said countries at the present time?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General regrets it is not in his power to give separate information regarding the offices in Wales at the time of the transfer. England and Wales together had 2,268 offices, Scotland 419, and Ireland 245. At the present time the numbers are 7,773, 1,484, and 926 respectively.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that Applecross, Ross-shire, is situated at a distance of 15 miles from the nearest telegraph office; and whether, in view of the inability of the Applecross District to provide a guarantee of £67 a year for the establishment of a telegraph office, he will reconsider his determination to demand a guarantee or reduce the amount thereof?

MR. HANBURY: Yes. The Postmaster General is aware that Applecross is 15 miles from the nearest telegraph office. He would be glad if it were possible to meet the wishes of the people there, but he regrets it is not in his power, under the regulations of the Treasury, to accept a lower guarantee than £67 a year.

HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, seeing that the labourers employed in the Ordnance Department at Haulbowline are only in receipt of 16s. per week, the War Office will consider the desirability of paying these men upon the same scale as the labourers employed in the Admiralty Department of the island?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The Secretary of State has caused inquiry to be made as to the rate of wages in the neighbourhood of Haulbowline, and it appears that the amount paid by the War Department is fully the current rate paid to ordinary labourers in the district.

INCOME TAX (SCOTLAND).

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the fact that while income tax is paid on ordinary feu duties in Scotland as on ground rents in England, it is charged twice, once on the feuar and once on the superior, on the double or treble feu duties payable under the Scottish custom at stated intervals; whether he can state approximately the annual amount of revenue on which this double income tax is thus paid; and whether, as no similar duplication of income tax arises under the English or Irish systems, he will consider the advisability of either allowing the feuar to deduct income tax in payment of so-called duplicands and triplicands, or of allocating the second income tax now levied on them to purely Scottish purposes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Property chargeable under Schedule A of the Income Tax Acts is assessed on its full annual value, and, under the Act of 1842, the superior is assessed directly in respect of all dues or casual profits, other than rents or other annual payments, on which he pays the tax by suffering deduction. Therefore, as these duplicate or triplicate feu duties are charged to income tax directly, while the property out of which they issue is already assessed on its full annual value, there is to that extent a double charge of income tax. But these periodical payments or fines are not confined to Scotland, and, wherever they occur, there is the same difficulty under the income tax law. I am unable to state the annual amount of tax paid on these sums, but it will be clear to the hon. Member that if this question is to be raised it cannot be dealt with as a purely Scottish one.

INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY.

MR. J. L. WANKLYN (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received a memorial from the Incorporated Law Society praying that a grant should be made to them in respect of the increasing cost of the judicial duties imposed upon the society by recent legislation; and whether, having regard to the favourable reply which he gave last year to a similar request, he will favourably consider the application?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, I have received the request alluded to, and last year I proposed a clause in Committee on the Budget Bill to give effect to it. This, however, was opposed, and I was unable to proceed with it. I do not think it advisable to repeat the proposal, and am not at present prepared to deal with the matter in any other way.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton): May I ask whether the opposition to the proposal of last year was founded, not upon any objection to the merits of the scheme, but to the method of procedure in intercepting the tax before it reached the Exchequer, and whether representations have not been made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the proposal to make this annual grant upon the Estimates would receive a large amount of support from hon. Members on both sides of the House?

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether the opposition of the right hon. Gentleman for West

Monmouth did not go to the merits of the proposal?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That is my recollection. I am aware that there is a feeling in the House in favour of the proposal, but as I understood the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth to object to it altogether, I should like to have an expression of opinion from the House before I should be prepared to deal with the matter.

ARREST OF MR. CRANSTOUN.

MR. J. A. WILLOX (Liverpool, Everton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether W. J. Cranstoun, a British subject, was unlawfully arrested, his property seized, and himself deported from Honolulu; whether Mr. Cranstoun's claim against the master and owners of the steamship *Warrimoo* for forcibly bringing him from Honolulu to Vancouver against his will, has been decided by the Supreme Court of British Columbia in his favour and damages awarded against them; and what steps Her Majesty's Government are taking to obtain from the Hawaiian Government reparation and apology for the wrongful acts?

MR. CURZON: The particulars with regard to the arrest and deportation from Honolulu of Mr. Cranstoun have for long been in the possession of Her Majesty's Government, and the latter are quite prepared to take up his case and to make representations to the Hawaiian Government on the subject as soon as adequate proof is furnished to them of the British nationality of Mr. Cranstoun. It is nearly a year ago since he was applied to for this information by Her Majesty's Consul General at Honolulu, but we have not heard that any reply has been received, neither have we any knowledge of the proceedings in the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

HOLIDAYS (PRISON WARDERS).

MR. WILLOX: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, of all civil servants, prison warders are alone in not being allowed holidays on Christmas Day, Good Friday, and Bank Holidays: and, whether he will give instructions that, as far as practicable, these public servants shall have the Bank Holidays or, where this is impossible owing to the exigencies of the service, they shall be allowed at convenience other days' holidays in lieu thereof?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I am not aware that it is the case that all civil servants with the exception of prison warders are allowed these holidays. Christmas Day and Good Friday are treated as Sunday in the prisons, and as a consequence half the staff are on leave on both those days. No other arrangement is possible without an increase of staff, which could not, I think be justified, in view of the amount of leave already allowed to these officers.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT (ROMFORD STATION).

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to a serious accident which occurred at Romford Station on Wednesday, 31st March, when a man was cut to pieces whilst engaged in shunting operations with horses on the main line, either caused by the horses taking fright at a passing train or by the man having to leave the horses to attend to the chain attached to some horse boxes; and whether, having regard to the danger attached to such operations, he will consider the advisability of requiring the Railway Companies who use horses for shunting purposes to employ at least two men to do this work, one man to attend to the horse and the other to see to the attaching and detaching of the chain?

MR. HANBURY (for Mr. RITCHIE): Yes, Sir, I am informed that the Board of Trade have received information of the accident referred to, and that a Sub-Inspector of Railways has been ordered to inquire into the circumstances. When his report is received the action to be taken by the Board of Trade will be carefully considered, and the suggestion of the hon. Member will be borne in mind.

POSTCARDS (MOURNING BORDERS).

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he has altered his determination, expressed in the House of Commons on the 18th February 1896, not to permit the use of postcards with mourning borders; and whether any person may now post these cards without being subjected to a fine?

Mr. HANBURY: The rule as to writing and printing on the address side of a postcard has recently been modified, and postcards with a mourning border on either side are now admissible.

KEW GARDENS.

Mr. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, what is the average daily number of students in botany who visit the Royal Gardens at Kew during hours when the gardens are closed to the general public?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. A. Akers-Douglas Kent, St. Augustine's): The attendance varies, but the average may be taken as 20.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING IN SCOTTISH WATERS.

Captain PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that during the past few days the trawler *Dania* has again been fishing in the Moray Firth, and that she is now joined by a German trawler the *Gadus*, No 11, of Hamburg; and whether if this is so, and in view of the apparent impossibility of either preventing foreign trawlers from fishing within the prescribed areas, or from selling the fish so caught at English ports, and that the prohibition of their sale at Scottish ports is only an aggravation of the injury to Scottish interests, the only result being to deprive Scotland of the tolls and dues on the vessels, he, as representing Scottish interests in this House, will urge upon the Government the necessity of taking some steps to really protect these interests in the immediate future?

Mr. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs) said that he had put down a Question on this subject for Tomorrow, which he might as well put now. It was to ask the Lord Advocate whether he would institute inquiries to ascertain whether the trawlers mentioned in the Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, were engaged in genuine business on behalf of foreign owners, or whether they had been brought or induced to come to the Moray Firth by the owners of British trawlers or other persons interested in the industry, in order to evade the laws of the realm?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: The trawler *Dania* is still fishing in the extra territorial waters of the Moray Firth, but when boarded recently by the commander of the *Jackal*, the master intimated his intention of departing for Icelandic waters at the end of this week. The trawler *Gadus*, H. 11, has not been seen inside the Moray Firth, but was sighted by an Aberdeen trawler off the coast of Aberdeenshire. After consultation with the Secretary for Scotland, I see no reason to take action in the direction desired by the hon. and gallant Gentleman. In answer to the supplementary question of the hon. Member for Wick Burghs, I have to say that inquiries have been made, and so far no evidence has been brought to the knowledge of the Scottish Office to show that these trawlers are anything else than *bona fide* foreign trawlers.

Captain PIRIE said that, as this was a matter which was attracting great attention in the north of Scotland, he asked whether the Lord Advocate could make a statement of denial?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1896.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in December 1896, Francis M'Kenna, former tenant of a farm in the townland of Burn, county Cavan, served a notice under the forty-seventh section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896; that the Commissioners replied the lands were occupied by a new tenant; and, if so, can he state what the new tenant's name is?

*The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): M'Kenna, in his application for re-instatement, stated that since 1892 his former holding had been in the occupation of a tenant. If this be accurate, the forty-seventh section does not apply, and if inaccurate, it is open to him to renew his application.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he can state, in the case of Bernard Rorke, Drumlane, County Cavan, to be reinstated in his holding, under Section 47 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, the Official Receiver, before deciding to oppose the tenant's application, applied formally to the Court for directions in the matter, and whether such application was made in open Court or in Chamber ; (2) is there any official record of the application and of the Judge's order thereon, and before which of the Judges was the application heard ; and (3) did the Receiver make any report to the Judge prejudicing the tenant's claim for reinstatement ?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR : The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The application to the Land Judge was made in Chamber. The Receiver's report is a confidential document, the nature of which cannot be disclosed.

WEST AFRICA (LIQUOR TRADE).

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is possible to lay before the House a Memorandum on the liquor trade in West Africa, which has been for some time privately before the Chambers of Commerce, and to make the Return on the same subject granted to the House in August 1895 ?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) : The Paper on the liquor traffic, containing the Memorandum to which the hon. Member refers, is in hand, and I hope to lay it, together with the Return granted to the House in August 1895, in a few days.

OYSTER CULTURE.

Sir WILLIAM PRIESTLEY (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the report published last year concerning Oyster Culture in relation to disease, and the diminished consumption of oysters which has resulted therefrom, he proposes to have oyster beds regularly inspected, or to adopt such other measures as will give the public a reasonable assurance that oysters in the market are derived from healthy sources, and not likely to be the cause of disease ?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) : The subject referred to in the Question is one which I admit to be of importance. It presents, however, many difficulties. The inspection of the oyster beds in this country would not in itself secure the result suggested, and the Question has to be considered in connection with oysters imported from abroad as well as those obtained from English beds. Any scheme to be effective would require legislation, but the subject is receiving my careful consideration.

Sir W. PRIESTLEY : Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether in localities where oyster beds and pits had been certified to be contaminated by sewage, any steps will be taken to improve their condition ?

Mr. CHAPLIN : I am unable to say without notice what steps are or are not to be taken by local authorities.

POSTAL UNION CONVENTION.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether care will be taken, in connection with the forthcoming meeting of the Postal Union Convention at Washington, to reserve to Her Majesty's Government and all other component elements in the British Empire complete freedom of action in respect of all postal arrangements, including charges within the limits of the Empire itself ?

Mr. HANBURY : In 1890 the Post Office were advised that we had no power to establish rates other than those prescribed by the Union between Great Britain and the colonies. The Congress of Vienna in 1891 held that we might establish with our colonies rates lower than the Union rates, but higher than our inland rates; but whether this will be confirmed by the Washington Congress is a matter of speculation. The representative of the Government will, however, be instructed to urge the point. As a fact, the United States and Canada have established rates lower than the Union rates between those two countries, as have Austria and Germany, and the Union has not interfered.

COUNTY COUNCILS (LOANS FROM OFFICIALS).

MR. E. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it has been brought to his notice that cases have occurred in which members of County Councils have borrowed moneys from officials of such County Councils; and whether he will consider the possibility of preventing similar transactions in the future?

MR. CHAPLIN: No such cases have been brought under my attention, and, assuming that there were such cases, the Local Government Board have no power to interfere, as neither the members nor the officers of County Councils are subject to any jurisdiction of the Local Government Board in such matters.

PARISH COUNCIL (MARNOCH, BANFFSHIRE).

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he will state on what grounds the Local Government Board compelled the Parish Council of Marnoch, in Banffshire, to discharge the auditor who for some years had done the work satisfactorily for the Parochial Board for £3 3s. per annnm, and to accept the services of a new auditor who charges £6 6s., although he throws upon the Inspector of the Poor the duty of making up a complete abstract of income and expenditure, a duty which the original auditor himself performed; whether he is aware that in the Fordyce and other parishes dissatisfaction also exists on account of the cost and inconvenience arising out of the present system of auditing parish accounts: and whether the Government is prepared to take any steps to remedy these grievances?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The Act of 1894 imposed on the Local Government Board the duty of appointing auditors, and this duty they discharged by grouping the parishes of Scotland as experience and convenience suggested; obviously, therefore, it was impossible to provide for all the former parochial auditors. It is difficult to compare the old voluntary audit with the statutory audit now in existence, the latter being, as a rule, much more thorough and efficient. The new audit is conducted under stringent regulations, and is therefore more costly than the old system. The Local Government Board is aware that some dissatisfaction exists, and is considering how the system can most satisfactorily be improved. I am in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland, and hope very soon to be in a position to make a definite announcement on this subject. The duty of making up an abstract is laid by Statute on the Clerk or Inspector.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. W. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he has seen a resolution of the Grand Jurors of the County of Galway assembled at the Spring Assizes, urging the Government to grant a day mail service direct to Clifden; and if he will see his way to carry out the wishes of the Grand Jury in this matter?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has seen the resolution referred to. There is already a day mail service by railway to Clifden, but the Grand Jury appear to desire that the trains between Galway and Clifden shall work in close connection at Galway with the accelerated day mail trains on the main line. So far, however, as is known, the company do not propose to run for their own traffic such trains as those desired, and, in view of the large outlay which would be involved, the Postmaster General would not be justified in calling upon them to run special trains on this line for the day mails.

SHERIFFS (IRELAND).

MR. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether it is within the power of the Lord Lieutenant to appoint as Sheriff for a county in Ireland a gentleman who is not possessed of any lands within the county; (2) whether, notwithstanding his refusal to act by reason of his inability to meet the expenses pertaining to the office, or for other good reason, he can be enforced to act or be indicted for refusing to take the oath; (3) will he explain why, although the Corporations of the cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Kilkenny, and of the county of the town of Drogheda, appoint their own Sheriffs, and the person so appointed may decline to serve without incurring any penalty, the City of Belfast, with a population of nearly 300,000, has no power to appoint a Sheriff for the city; and (4) if he will state whether the gentleman appointed as Sheriff for the comparatively small county of the town of Carrickfergus is to be prosecuted for refusing to take up an office which he never consented to fill?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The fourth paragraph refers to the merits of a pending prosecution against Captain Higginson, and the first and second paragraphs are either abstract questions of law or refer to matters in issue in that suit. I must, therefore, decline to give any answer to these paragraphs, as it must necessarily prejudice the trial of the suit. With reference to the third paragraph, power is given to the Town Councils of the cities named, under the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Act, 1876, to select three persons qualified to fill the office of Sheriff, and of the three so selected, the Lord Lieutenant, not the Town Council, appoints one to be Sheriff. Section 7 of the Act provides that any person appointed to the office under the Act may decline to serve without incurring any penalty. The Act does not apply to Belfast.

Mr. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) asked whether it was under Statute Law or the Common Law that prosecutions for not serving the office of Sheriff were taken?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The prosecution is taken under the Common Law.

Mr. McCARTAN asked whether it was the practice of the Attorney General in Ireland to appoint a man who had no land in the county and no qualification, to serve?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: That question assumes one of the matters in dispute, and I must therefore decline to answer it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) asked what would be the venue of the trial?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: Dublin.

Mr. McCARTAN inquired whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman had been called to the fact that Judge Gibson, at the recent assizes at Belfast, spoke most favourably of this man?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND replied in the negative.

Mr. CARSON: Can he be sent to gaol for not serving this office of Sheriff?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND was understood to reply in the affirmative.

PETTY SESSIONS (BALLYNAHINCH).

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Clerk for the Petty Sessions District of Ballynahinch has resigned; and, if so, on what pension, and by whom the duties of the office are now discharged; and whether the Lord Lieutenant has received a memorial, signed by magistrates of every class and creed, praying that for the convenience of the public the Petty Sessions District of Ballynahinch should be separated from the Districts of Dromore and Dromana, and that, if possible, a clerk who has a residence in Ballynahinch should be appointed to the office?

***Mr. GERALD BALFOUR**: The Petty Sessions Clerk of Ballynahinch has retired on a pension of £258 per annum, but he continues to act until his successor is appointed. The district of Ballynahinch has been separated from the district of Dromore and Dromana; the election of a clerk is in the hands of the magistrates.

LAND COMMISSION.

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the Court valuers at present working for the Land Commission have been, or are liable to act as, Sub-Commissioners; and (2) what additional means of obtaining information over that of the Sub-Commissioners have these Court valuers for reviewing by their Reports to the Chief Commission on appeals, and without submitting themselves for examination in court, the fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative, though as a matter of fact none of the Court valuers have been employed as Assistant Commissioners for several years past. The valuers have no greater facilities for obtaining information than the Assistant Commissioners have whose decisions are appealed from. I have already pointed out to the hon. Member that the Land Commissioners, and not the valuers, are responsible for the rents fixed on appeal. The Land Commission, at the hearing, have before them the schedules filled up by the Assistant Commissioners as well as the reports of the valuers, and the evidence of the parties, and fix the rents, having regard to all these matters and to the circumstances mentioned in the 8th Section of the Land Act of 1881.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Court valuer has in his hands, before making his valuation, the valuation of the Commissioners?

MR. CARSON: May I also ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in any case the Land Commissioners value otherwise than on the amounts fixed by the Court valuer?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot give any answer to the second question. As to the first question, my impression is that the Court valuers have those particulars before them, but I am not sure.

MR. McCARTAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Chief Commissioners never inspect the holding, and that the only additional information they have is the information sent by the Court valuers?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I believe that is so.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) when the new Purchase Rules of the Land Commission will be issued; (2) is he aware that, after the decision b the Queen's Bench Division in Vicker v. Deane, on the 3rd Section of the pu chase Act 1888, the Land Commission i stituted proposals to purchase instead agreements to purchase, with the resu that tenants still remain liable to pa arrears of rent instead of interest, as th statute prescribes; (3) will he call th attention of the Land Commission t another result of the use of such proposa instead of agreements in what happene recently on the Aremburg Chute Estat where the sale was made by the mor gagees to a private person for less tha half what the tenants offered, through th Land Commission, although the tenant (from whom the receiver Judge accepte interest in lieu of rent) have no remed against the mortgagees as they woul under agreements; and (4) would he hav any objection to lay upon the Table, wit a view to discussing the new Purchas Rules and Forms, copies of the followin documents relating to the Arembur Chute Estate, viz., the tenants' agree ments lodged in Land Commission b mortgagees; the requisitions on titl made by Land Commission; the plead ings and affidavits in Rolls Court in ad ministration suit by mortgagees; th judgment of Court of Appeal thereon mortgagees' affidavits in Land Judge' Court, and the rulings of Land Judge?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FO IRELAND: With my right hon. Friend' permission I will answer this Questio The Land Purchase Rules, dated 16t March 1897, have been issued, and wer presented to Parliament on the 23rd that month. No change has been mad in the forms, either of agreements or proposals consequent upon the decisio by the Queen's Bench Division, i Vickery v. Deane, delivered in Novembe 1892, and which referred to the appl cation of the 3rd Section of the Lan Purchase Act 1888, to cases under th Redemption of Rent Act. (See Cher and Wakeley, page 472.) With regar to the third paragraph, the facts co nected with the Chute Estate are as fo lows:—The tenants in 1892 applied the Land Commission to purchase th estate under the 5th Section of the A of 1885 for the purpose of having the respective holdings resold to them, th tenants undertaking in the common for escribed to buy their respective hold-gs at certain prices. Certain rulings ere made upon these applications, es-ecially in reference to head rents and cumbrances to which the estate was ibject. These rulings were never com-lied with, and consequently the nego-ations for the sale to the Commissioners ll through. The Land Judge in May 396 sold the property to a private pur-iaser on terms which he considered lvantageous to the interests of all con-erned. No requisitions on title were iade by the Land Commission. The un-ertakings of the tenants were all in the ommon form, one of which I will be lad to furnish to the hon. Member. As the affidavits of the mortgagees and ie rulings of the Land Judge, I have illed for certified copies of these and ill be also glad to supply them to the on. Member. The suit in the Rolls ourt was one between private indi-iduals on a matter entirely unconnected ith the sale of the tenants, and as the les of the Court are open to inspection, is not considered necessary to lay these ocuments or copies of them on the Table f the House, but I shall be happy to how to the hon. Member the Report I ave received should he desire to see it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it not the fact hat in consequence of the forms used y the Land Commission, tenants have ost the purchase of their holdings?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for RELAND: Not at all, Sir. The tenants ndertook to purchase from the Commis-ioners, in case of the Commissioners eing declared purchasers. But they ere not.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: But if these forms ad been forwarded as direct agreements, ould they have been enforced?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for RELAND: The agreement is entirely onditional on the fact that the Com-iissioners themselves were to remain the urchasers.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I will draw fur-heir attention to this matter.

IFLE RANGE (TYRELLA, CO. DOWN).

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Jnder Secretary of State for War what rrangements have been made or are in rocess of arrangement with reference to the establishment of a rifle range at or near Tyrella, in the County of Down?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): Negotiations are proceeding regarding a site suitable for a rifle range near Ballykinder, but I am not at present in a position to make a definite statement on the subject.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of allowing the mounted branches of the service to wear their shabracques when on duty connected with the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty's reign?

Mr. BRODRICK: As the wearing of shabracques has been discontinued except in the Household Cavalry, it is not considered advisable that they should be worn on this occasion.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).

Captain DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. Patrick A. M'Hugh) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he is aware that a labourer named Thomas Davis, of Cullinagh, Crusheen, county Clare, applied to the Ennis Board of Guardians in November last for a labourer's cottage, and that that Board has since then taken no action in the matter; also that Davis, his wife, and two children, inhabit a one room dwelling in which there is neither window or chimney; and (2) will he direct an inquiry to be made into this case, and insist on the Ennis Board of Guardians giving effect to the provisions of the Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Acts, if it is found that they have failed in the discharge of their duty?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The labourer in question brought this matter under the notice of the Local Government Board in January last, and the Board were informed by the Guardians that the application would be considered by them in connection with their next scheme for cottages. No new scheme has yet been submitted, and it is not considered necessary to hold an Inquiry, as suggested. 139 cottages have already been authorised to be provided in this Union.

NATIONAL SCHOOL (SIX-MILE-BRIDGE, KILLARNEY).

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland has his attention been called to the case of Daniel Moynihan, who had been for 36 years teacher of the Six-Mile-Bridge National School, near Killarney, who died suddenly in the first week of January in the present year, having taught his school on Monday 4th January, and was buried on the following Saturday; was the deceased teacher highly proficient, and entitled to a retiring allowance if he had applied for it; will he explain why the application of the widow and six orphans of the deceased, who are now destitute, for the retiring allowance to which the deceased was entitled was refused; and will this case be reconsidered?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The teacher referred to rendered service up to the 1st February (not January), and died on the 4th of that month, the day on which he resigned. His service had been satisfactory, and had his health been certified as broken down, and his application for a retiring gratuity been received in due time prior to his death, there is no reason to suppose that a gratuity would not have been awarded in the case. But there is no legal power to award a gratuity to the representatives of a deceased teacher where death occurs before the grant is made. In such cases the premiums paid by the deceased teacher to the Pension Fund are refunded to his representatives with interest, and this has been done in the present case. There is no basis for reconsideration of the case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: This sort of case occurs every year, and questions of this kind are put over and over again, will the right hon. Gentleman bring in a Bill to remedy the law in this respect?

[No reply was given.]

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland (1) whether the Royal Irish Constabulary barracks at Tullaghan county Leitrim, is about to be broken up (2) can he state on what grounds and, if the change is being made for purposes of economy; can he say how much will be saved to the local rates, if any, and how much to the Imperial Exchequer; and (3) to what purpose will the savings effected by the proposed change be devoted?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A proposal is now before the Inspector General for the abolition of this police station. It is considered by the local responsible authorities that a separate station at Tullaghan is no longer essential, and that the necessary protection to persons and property can be afforded from adjoining stations. No saving to local rates will result, inasmuch as no rate in aid of the cost of police is locally levied, but a saving of about £200 a year will ultimately accrue to the Imperial Exchequer. The Question in the last paragraph is part of a much larger one, and I must refer the hon. Member to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. RICHARD N. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Irish Government has been drawn to the statements contained in the pastorals of some of the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops, and in a recent charge of the Coroner for the County of Donegal to the prevalent indications of efforts now being made in Ireland to re-establish secret unlawful societies; and, if so, whether, in view of such indications, the Government will reconsider their intention to reduce the Royal Irish Constabulary Force?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Attention has been directed to passages in recent pastorals of several of the Roman Catholic Bishops in Ireland in denunciation of secret societies. As regards the reduction of the Royal Irish Constabulary force, I must point out that, in view of the continued improvement in the condition of Ireland generally, it has been found practicable to arrange for a considerable reduction in the strength of the force. This decision was come to with due regard to the public interests, and after consultation with the responsible authorities. I see no occasion to alter it.

MR. DANE: Has the attention of the Government been called to the charge of the Coroner respecting the condition of things in County Donegal?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No; I am afraid I have not looked into that part of the question. Perhaps the hon. Member will put it down again.

CRETE.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any of the Great Powers, in addition to England and Italy, have agreed to the French proposal for the early evacuation of Crete by Turkish troops; and when that evacuation is expected to take place?

MR. CURZON: We have not heard of the formal proposal to which the hon. Member appears to allude, though inquiries have been addressed by the French Government to the other Powers as to their views on the subject. It is impossible to state at present when the withdrawal of the Turkish troops will take place, several of the Powers having expressed the opinion that the withdrawal of the Greek troops should be an antecedent step. The initiative would appear, therefore, to rest with the latter.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT (POTTER'S LANE, WEDNESBURY).

MR. WALFORD GREEN (Wednesbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to an accident which recently occurred at the level crossing on the London and North Western Railway at Potter's Lane, Wednesbury; and whether, having regard to the number of accidents that occur at level crossings, he will consider the possibility of closing by law all such crossings in populous districts?

MR. HANBURY (for Mr. RITCHIE): Yes, Sir; the attention of the Board of Trade has been called to this accident. They cannot, however, support the suggestion that all level crossings at populous places should be abolished. The hon. and learned Member will recollect that level crossings are made with the direct legislative sanction of Parliament.

MASSACRE AT EGHIN.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can inform the House whether punishment has been inflicted on the authors of the massacre at Eghin last October, in which 1,500 unarmed Armenian Christians were cruelly put to death, as detailed in Blue-book, Turkey, No. 7, 1897?

MR. CURZON: We have not heard that any answer has been returned to the strong representation made by Her Majesty's Ambassador on the subject in December last, but inquiry will be made of Sir Philip Currie.

CAVALRY HORSES.

CAPTAIN PIRIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the War Office is advised that cavalry horses of under six or over 14 years of age are thoroughly efficient and fit for active service; and, if so, at what ages the limits of fitness for active service are placed; and how many horses there are maintained on the peace establishment of the cavalry at ages outside the limits so fixed?

MR. BRODRICK: In the opinion of the military authorities horses may be sent on field service in Europe between five and 16 years of age, provided they are sound. There are 1,249 horses on the peace establishment of the cavalry under five years of age, and 79 over 16 years of age.

ENLISTMENT REGULATIONS.

CAPTAIN PIRIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary for War whether he will state the average age at enlistment of the 402 young soldiers by whom, or upon whose behalf, applications to be released from their engagements were made in 1896, on the ground that they had enlisted below the age of 18 years; and the number of such applications which were acceded to; and whether it is a fact that a boy named Tyrrell was enlisted for the cavalry in May 1896, giving his age as 18 years; that his parents made application for his discharge in February 1897, stating that he was a mere child, giving proof by the production of his birth certificate that his actual age on enlistment was 15 years and 1 month, and that the boy was then discharged after serving for 10 months; and, if this is so, whether he will inquire into the matter, with a view to stopping in the future such wilful disregard of the regulations for enlistment which is becoming so prevalent?

MR. BRODRICK: The average age of the 402 young soldiers cannot readily be given; but the following details regarding them may meet the hon. Member's requirements:—172 were discharged as under 17 years, 155 were discharged as between 17 and 18 years; and 75 between 17 and 18 years of age were retained. The case of the boy Tyrrell is as stated in the Questions. He gave his age as 18 years, and his physical development was so fully the equivalent of that age as to deceive the medical officer. There was no wilful disregard of regulations, and the number of enlistments under age has decreased of late years.

CAPTAIN PIRIE asked whether, if the discharge of Tyrrell had not been applied for on the eve of the leaving of the regiment for India, the boy would have been sent to India?

MR. BRODRICK said that if the boy deliberately told a lie and said his age was 18, and if his physical development were up to the standard of that age, as there were no means by which the medical officer could discover the year in which the boy was born, the boy would of course have been sent to India. ["Hear, hear!"]

CAPTAIN PIRIE: I cannot argue the question — [*Ministerial cheers*] — and, therefore, I give notice that as the Government have taken—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot give notice in that manner.

SANITARY MEASURES (INDIA).

CAPTAIN PIRIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what steps, if any, have been taken to carry out the urgent recommendation of the Sanitary Commissioner with the Government in India, in his Report for 1894, which is also quoted with approval in the Report on Sanitary Measures in India in 1894-95, that much might be done to diminish the extent and severity of contagious diseases among the British troops in India by providing increased facilities for bathing with comfort and convenience in private and public baths, and by inculcating habits of personal cleanliness among the troops?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have received no special Report on the action taken on the representations made by the Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India in 1894, but I understand that, in the opinion of the military authorities, ample provision is made for supplying British soldiers in India with the means of personal cleanliness. The importance of the matter is so well understood that it seems unnecessary to call for any special Report.

WELSH LAND COMMISSION (REPORT).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether he is in a position to state his decision as to authorising an official translation into Welsh of certain portions of the Report of the Welsh Land Commissioners; (2) whether he is aware that such a translation is the unanimous recommendation of the Commissioners, and that they state in paragraph 926 of the Report that without such a translation there will be great difficulty in bringing the views of the Commissioners to the knowledge of a large number of the tenant farmers of Wales; and (3) whether he has considered the suggestion made by the Commissioners that the determination of the parts of the Report which it is most desirable to translate into Welsh should be left to a Committee of the Commissioners, acting in conjunction with the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative; to the second and third in the affirmative. Matters are in this position at present: After consultation with the Treasury, I informed the Chairman of the Commission that before making any recommendation to the Treasury I should wish to be furnished with a preliminary statement as to the nature and bulk of the extracts which the Commission thought might with advantage be translated; and I am now waiting for his final answer, which has not yet reached me.

PRIVILEGE CABS.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet received any answer from the railway companies with regard to the new proposals submitted to him by the Association of Cabdrivers and Proprietors in the Metropolis, with a view to the settlement of the privilege question; and whether, in view of the probable large number of visitors to London during the ensuing season, he will endeavour to arrange a conference between the parties, with a view to putting an end to the tension that exists in the business?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I received last month certain fresh proposals for a solution of the present difficulty from the committee of a conference of cab proprietors and cab drivers, but after a careful examination of them, and some private information, I have been forced to the conclusion that they do not afford a probable basis for a settlement. If I can see any indications, as at present I must say I do not, that such a conference as the hon. Member suggests would be acceptable to both parties, I will gladly do anything that lies in my power to promote it.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES COMMISSION.

Mr. J. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to the provisions inserted in the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1895, whereby the powers conferred on the Scotch Fishery Board of regulating trawling within 13 miles of the Scotch coast cannot be exercised unless the States Signatories of the North Sea Convention accept them as binding on their own subjects, what steps (if any) the Foreign Office has taken to obtain their assents from these States Signatories?

Mr. CURZON: No steps have so far been taken to obtain the assent of the States Signatories of the North Sea Fisheries Convention to a limit of 13 miles for trawling, the matter still being under the consideration of the Government.

SAILORS' HOME (CORK).

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty (1) whether he has received a communication from the Royal Sailors' Home, Cork, applying for an increase of the annual grant to the Home given by the Admiralty; (2) whether he is aware that this grant was some years ago £100 per annum, but was reduced to £25 per annum, and could he explain the reason for this large reduction; (3) whether he is aware that 1,170 men of the Royal Navy availed themselves of the Home during the past year, and that the expenditure for the year was considerably in excess of the receipts; and (4) whether the Admiralty will increase the grant?

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the large and increasing number of sailors who avail themselves of the Royal Cork Sailors' Home, the Admiralty will consider the desirability of making some addition to their present small annual grant to that institution?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): The facts are substantially as stated in the first three paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question. The number of men of the Royal Navy using the Home last year appears to have been exceptionally large. The claims of the Royal Cork Sailors' Home shall be carefully considered when the annual grants are made. The whole question of the method of allocating these grants is now under consideration.

Captain DONELAN asked whether the recent considerable addition to the naval establishment at Cork Harbour would also be considered?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; all the circumstances will be taken into consideration, but I cannot speak very hopefully of being able to raise this grant. A much larger grant is made to Queenstown also.

In answer to Mr. Carson.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said: The only alteration in the condition of the service is that candidates who failed have been allowed one further trial.

NITRO-GLYCERINE FACTORY (ANGLESEY).

MR. W. T. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the draft licence for the erection of a nitro-glycerine manufactory by Mr. David Paisley at Rhos Neigr, in Anglesey, does not carry out the requirements of the Explosives Acts, in not containing a proper plan showing the situation of the proposed works; whether he is aware that the said manufactory is to be built upon common lands, and in dangerous proximity to the main line of the London and North Western Railway, and to the rising watering-place of Rhos Neigr; and whether a licence under the Explosives Acts, when granted, would entitle the licensee to enclose common lands in defiance of the rights of the commoners?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The plan attached to the draft licence was considered by the Chief Inspector of Explosives to satisfy the requirements of the Act. The question of dangerous proximity is one which will be proper for the local authority to consider in deciding on the application. I am not aware that the factory is to be built upon common land, but I should certainly say that the licence would not entitle the holder to enclose such land.

COOPERS (DEPTFORD VICTUALLING YARD).

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if any decision has yet been come to in regard to the petition of the coopers employed in the Deptford Victualling Yard for an increase in their daily rate of pay?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Two rates of pay are in force for coopers employed in the Victualling Yards—(1) the piece work rate of 6s. per day, or, in time of pressure, a maximum rate of 7s. per day; (2) the "day pay" rate of 4s. 4d. per day. For superannuation purposes, an average rate was fixed of 5s. per day. The coopers petitioned to have their "day pay" rate brought up to that decided on for superannuation, viz., 5s. per day, and after careful consideration, their Lordships decided to accede to their petition in its entirety, and allow the rate asked for. Orders have been issued to the Yards authorising the new rate to come into force from the commencement of the current financial year.

WATERFORD, DUNGARVAN AND LISMORE RAILWAY.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will undertake to restrain action on the part of the Board of Works in Ireland in regard to the Waterford, Dungarvan and Lismore Railway until the Estimates for the Board of Works come before the House, in order that opportunity may be given for Debate, and that the views of the ratepayers, whose interests are much larger than those of the Treasury, may be ascertained?

MR. HANBURY: May I ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone this Question till Monday, as I have not yet received the information from Dublin? Nothing will be done in the meantime.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: If the right hon. Gentleman undertakes to restrain the action of the Board of Works in the meantime, I will postpone the Question to Monday. But I think the most convenient course will be to postpone the Question until after the Easter holidays, if the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to do so.

MR. HANBURY: No, I think Monday will be better.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he could explain why the only communication made to the Duke of Devonshire by the Board of Works as to the proposed foreclosure or sale of the Waterford and Lismore line, had reference to a proposed hiring by them of the rolling stock (which belongs to His Grace), and that there was no communication in reference to the effect on the public interest, or on that of the guaranteeing ratepayers of county Waterford, as to the intended foreclosure; and whether any undertaking can be given that those interests, of which the Duke of Devonshire is the principal representative, will be consulted before either foreclosure or sale is sanctioned by the Treasury?

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Member is not correct in the assumption made in the first Question. Not one, but several communications were made to the Duke or his agent by the Board of Works on the subject of a foreclosure or sale, and there have been in addition interviews and correspondence on all the points mentioned, between the Duke and the Treasury, which is the Department controlling the Board of Works. The interests mentioned will, of course, be consulted, and it was solely in the interest of the locality that the Treasury have recently refused an offer of £120,000 from another quarter for their loan of £93,000 and arrears of interest.

Mr. CARSON: May I ask how the interests of those concerned were consulted?

Mr. HANBURY: Naturally the interest of those in the neighbourhood is one of the first things the Treasury would consider, and they have already considered it.

Mr. DUNBAR BARTON (Armagh, Mid.): Does it rest with the Board of Works in Dublin or with the Treasury in London to decide whether a mortgage of this kind is to be purchased. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

Mr. HANBURY: The matter rests with the Treasury.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, as the County of Waterford pays £14,000 a year for this line, if he can at least give us some assurance that the Gentleman, the next largest creditor to the Government, will be consulted?

Mr. HANBURY: He has been consulted, and is being consulted at the present moment.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to revert to my earlier Question for a moment. I would press him very strongly to allow the matter to stand over until after the Easter holidays, so that the Irish Members of different Parties, who are interested, may not be forced to remain here at great inconvenience until Tuesday next.

Mr. HANBURY: I will see whether I cannot give an answer to that Question To-morrow. That, at any rate, will not detain the hon. Member.

GUN LICENCE (CO. ROSCOMMON).

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Charles M'Dermott, of Clooncalgy, Ballinlough, County Roscommon, has been refused a licence to carry a double-barrelled gun, although his application for licence was supported by several Justices of the Peace; and, if so, on what grounds the application was refused?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: An application for the grant of an arms licence to M'Dermott was received in January 1895, signed by one Magistrate and other persons, including three Members of Parliament, of whom the hon. Member was one, and was refused by the Licensing Officer. The power to grant or withhold such a licence is vested by law in the Resident Magistrate, as Licensing Officer, and it would be contrary to practice to state the grounds on which the application in this, or any other case, was refused. I may add that in 1879, and again in 1892, the licence that this man had to keep firearms was revoked.

Mr. DILLON: Is there no remedy in case of a man being unfairly refused a licence?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I believe that there is no appeal from the decision of the Resident Magistrate.

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Army Medical Service is at the present time sufficient, not only for mobilisation, but for medical military needs at home and abroad; and, if not, whether any steps are being taken to increase the staff?

Mr. BRODRICK: The establishment of officers of the Medical Staff is about 40 under strength. Measures to make good this deficiency are now under consideration.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked whether it was not the fact that the officers on the retired list were as numerous as those on the active list, and whether steps would be taken to remedy this?

Mr. BRODRICK: The officers on the retired list are employed on the home service, and there are complaints in consequence that the officers on the active list are debarred from employment on the home stations.

NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in the Return which he has promised to present showing the effect of the Government proposals for necessitous School Board districts, he will make it clear on the face of the Return that the rate given is the nominal rate and not the actual amount paid by the ratepayers, and that the figures as given in the last published Report of the Committee of Council refer in some instances to periods as far back as the close of the year 1893?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir John Gorst, Cambridge University): The rate given in the Return will be that given in the financial statements of the respective School Boards. It is the gross rate per pound on the rateable value of the district, which would raise the sum received by the School Board from the rating authority. This will be made clear on the face of the Return. The figures in the last Report are those for the year ending September 29, 1895. Some figures for 1892-93 are introduced for purposes of comparison only.

Mr. GRAY asked whether the Return made by the School Boards in the year ending September 29, 1895, did not include statistics of schools for October, 1893, and that, in consequence, the Return would be, in parts, four years old?

Sir JOHN GORST: I must ask for notice of that Question.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS (CHARLEVILLE, CO. CORK).

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is contemplated to make a change in the arrangements for postal delivery in Charleville, county Cork; and, if so, is it intended to arrange that the latest delivery shall be on the north side of the town; and whether, in view of the fact that the principal offices and business establishments are on the north side, the postal authorities will reconsider the matter?

Mr. HANBURY: It is in contemplation to rearrange the postal delivery at Charleville on the 1st May, but the latest delivery will not be on the north side of the town. On the contrary, the delivery on that side will be made about 25 minutes earlier than at present.

POOR SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICTS.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the increased grant to poor School Board districts, after the first year in which it is paid, will be counted in reduction of the rate, and the grant, therefore, pro tanto reduced in subsequent years?

Sir J. GORST: The grant in the first year will depend on the rate needed when there was no such assistance given. In subsequent years the grant will be based on the rate needed when such assistance is given, which will presumably be somewhat less.

EDUCATION RATE.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General whether the rate in the pound, as mentioned in Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, and referred to in the Resolution of 5th April last, is the rate stated on the Demand Note of the rating authority and actually paid by the ratepayers, or the nominal rate determined by the proportion between the amount required by the School Board paid by the rating authority and expended in the year and the gross rateable value of the district, regardless of the amount which the ratepayer must find to cover the loss through compounding, cost of collection, bad debts, and empty houses?

Sir J. GORST: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the Question. I am advised that the rate in the pound, mentioned in Section 97 of the Act of 1870, and referred to in the Resolution of April 5, is not precisely either of the two rates mentioned in the Question. It means the rate in the pound on the rateable value of the district which produces the sum required in a year ending September 29 for the purpose of the annual expenses of the Board, and actually paid in that year to the treasurer by the rating authority. Thus it is the rate which yields as its net produce the sum so required and paid, a somewhat higher rate than that yielding the same sum as its nominal or gross produce.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University) moved "That the Bill be now read a Second time." The right hon. Gentleman said that the object of the Bill was to correct a mistake made by the Education Department under the late Government. At that time a scheme was framed under the Welsh Intermediate Act, and it was approved by the Committee of Council on Education in 1894. Immediately afterwards a petition was presented against the Bill, and in consequence of this petition, the scheme, according to law, ought to have been laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament for 40 days before it was brought into force by Order in Council. After the petition had been presented all the petitioners except eight withdrew their names, and it was supposed that the effect of that was to make the petition not in conformity with the regulations of the Act of 1873, and, therefore, without laying the scheme on the Table of either House of Parliament, it was brought into force by Order in Council. Then objection was taken in the House that the scheme ought not to have been so approved, but ought to have lain on the Table for 40 days. The Law Officers advised that a mistake had been made, but that there was no means by which this mistake could be set right except by annulling the Order in Council by means of an Act of Parliament. In accordance with that advice, in 1895, immediately after the present Government came into office, a Bill was introduced and read a Second time in that short Session, but it did not proceed further. It was introduced again in the last Session, but never had the advantage of a Second Reading. It was now once more before the House. It was a perfectly small affair, really, to correct a mistake which was inadvertently made by the Department. Nothing had been done under the scheme, and the Bill would place all parties exactly in the same position as if no such error had been committed.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire) proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." He submitted that the fact that an irregularity had been committed was not in itself a matter of sufficiently grave importance to warrant the rejection by the House of a scheme which was practically unanimously desired by the district. The rejection of the scheme would deprive the district of a very important addition to their educational machinery.

*MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the merits of the scheme could not be discussed. The only question which could properly be raised was whether an irregularity should be put right, and that without reference to whether the scheme was a good or a bad scheme.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN said that the only question was whether the Bill should be rejected, and whether the irregularity was so great as to justify the repealing of the assent. As he wished on behalf of those interested to express their strong feeling in favour of the scheme as it stood, he formally moved the rejection of the Bill.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) seconded the Amendment. He said that the question was now reduced to such narrow limits that it was really difficult to bring before the House what were the feelings of the parishioners of Berriew with regard to it. The parochial electors of the County Council district of Berriew said in their petition that they believed the scheme of establishing another department in the Berriew elementary school would be of great benefit to the district, and they prayed the House to reject the Bill for repealing the Royal Assent. They knew what would happen if this Bill was Read a Second time. When a Conservative Government was in power these schemes, or any portion of them, might either be rejected in the House of Commons or in the House of Lords if they did not accord with Conservative instincts; and when a Liberal Government was in power the Conservative Party was always strong enough in the House of Lords to secure their object. It was therefore natural, when a scheme, of which a parish had approved, had become law, the Welsh Members should try to prevent it from being upset. The Government had given the first place on a Thursday afternoon to a Bill which related to a single parish, and which was protested against by nearly all the inhabitants of that parish. There were 381 County Council electors in the parish, and out of that number 14 had refused to sign the petition, and 18 had not been asked. Every other person had signed the petition against the Bill; therefore, the Welsh Members came before the House with practically the entire body of feeling in the parish behind them. The consequence of passing this Bill would be that the parish would have to pay its share.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now going into the merits of the scheme.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS said it was extremely difficult to keep within the limits laid down. But the Government were actually putting down this Bill which applied to one parish, and was rejected by that parish, as the First Order of the Sitting; while the Government, when appealed to by the Welsh Members on behalf of the largest county in Wales, with a population of three-quarters of a million, to do something to correct a slight technical difficulty in connection with intermediate education, refused to do anything. The Government were surely not bringing this Measure forward because they had nothing better to do with their time. Wales had been waiting to see what the Government was going to do for it, and now this Bill was presented. He believed that throughout the length and breadth of the Principality the action of the Government would be looked upon as indicating a deeply-rooted hostility to the feelings of the majority of the Welsh people, and an unwillingness to do anything for that majority. In his judgment the Government had acted in a way that would be repudiated by the great majority of the Welsh people.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that the introduction of this Bill on the present occasion was a gross abuse of the time and patience of Parliament. [*Cheers.*] Though he did not understand the merits of the scheme, he understood the merits of this Bill. The Irish Members had again and again pressed on the Government the necessity for some legislation with regard to the Erasmus Smith Schools, but they had always been refused, on the ground that there was no time to deal with the question. This Bill set out a false statement on its very front when it was said that the Order should be annulled because of an inadvertence. If, for example, a suitor in any court in the kingdom was late, would a Bill be brought in to supplement his defects? The majority of the people of Berriew were in favour of the scheme, but a little knot of persons were opposed to it. On the facts being presented to them, this knot of persons withdrew their petition, and having withdrawn it, then the scheme became valid by law. But having become valid by law, and the scheme being obnoxious to this small section of the community, who happened to belong to the Church of England, the Government were now going to afford a small section the opportunity, by a special statute, to present a fresh petition. This was carrying legislation not merely to an excess, but into the grotesque. If ever there was a case for a private Bill, this would be the case. The Irish Members had been deprived by the Government of the Wednesday which they had obtained for their Land Bill. There had been very late sittings, and the Closure had been exercised freely on the understanding that the Government intended to get through some most important and stupendous legislation. But what had the mountain in labour produced? This Berriew School Bill—a Measure for two men and a boy in some parish in Wales. [*Laughter.*] That was the business which was given the first place on the Order Paper that day, and the last business set down was almost equally important—namely, the introduction of a Bill for making regulations with respect to bicycles in Ireland. [*Laughter.*] Members who had begged for nutritious legislation were offered this chopped straw instead. Here was a scheme formally made with the assent of the parish, as declared by a vast majority. A minute section of the inhabitants, however, petitioned, but did not proceed with their petition, and then some other people who would not put pen to paper——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is now repeating the arguments with which he began his speech.

Mr. T. M. HEALY observed that the Bill enjoyed one distinction—if nothing could be said in its favour, very little, apparently, could be said against it. [*Laughter.*] It was because this matter was so utterly unimportant that he protested against the time of the House being taken up with this discussion. The right hon. Gentleman had intimated that the late Government were in some way committed to this legislation; but at any rate the late Government had abstained from bringing in any Bill on this subject. He was not surprised that the vast majority of the people of Wales should view with prejudice and dislike the action of the Government. It was instructive to contrast the way in which a small number of people in Wales were being favoured by the Government with the way in which Irish people had been treated in similar circumstances.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not relevant to the subject before the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY said that the Welsh Members were well advised in opposing the Bill, having regard to the prejudice that surrounded it, and protested against the policy of the Government in frittering away the time of Parliament upon pettifogging legislation of the sort.

MR. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) thought that this Bill was far from being of a trifling character. He looked upon it as one of the best Bills that the Government had brought in. [*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] No one who examined the circumstances could deny that if this Measure had not been introduced parties who had been given rights under an Act of Parliament might have had their rights frittered away by departmental incompetency. An Act of Parliament laid down that before certain people could be interfered with by that revolutionary tribunal, the Charity Commission, the schemes propounded by it must be placed upon the Table of the House if that was desired. Parliament ought to insist upon that procedure jealously. As he understood this case, some persons who were interested in the Berriew School scheme petitioned against it, and asked that their petition should be laid upon the Table of the House. For some reason the Department concerned took upon itself to decide that the petitioners were not in earnest. It would be most unsatisfactory if the Department could disregard a petition on the ground that they had been informed that certain of the petitioners no longer wished to have their names appended to it. The negligence or incompetence of the Department had led to a serious miscarriage of justice, and the object of the Bill was to preserve the rights given by Parliament to those who were interested in charities. They might congratulate themselves upon the fact that they had a Government in power strong enough to put an end to such gross acts of interference with the rights of the community. [*Opposition laughter.*] He only wished that the same strength of purpose were exhibited when similar injustice was perpetrated in Wales. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) thought they owed a debt of gratitude to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for bringing the House to a sense of the importance of the Bill before it. When he wished to ascertain the relative importance of proposed Measures it was his practice to refer to the Speech from the Throne, and in that speech this year he found this Bill distinctly foreshadowed. The first passage addressed to the House of Commons said:—

> "A Measure for the promotion of primary education, by securing the maintenance of Voluntary Schools, will be laid before you."

That had been done. Then the Speech went on:—

> "If time permits, you will be invited to consider further proposals for educational legislation."

Well, time had permitted, the Government having prevented them from discussing important subjects which were not connected with education. The Necessitous Board Schools Bill they knew was an after-thought, and therefore the present Measure was what the Government must have had in mind when they foreshadowed "further proposals for educational legislation." He trusted that the Welsh Members would be duly grateful. The Government would never have placed this Bill first on the Paper on the Thursday before Easter—one of the most important days in the Session—if they had not believed it to be an important Measure. It was an important Measure, and its importance lay in its preamble, which raised a question upon which they ought to have the advice of the

Law Officers of the Crown, who, however, were not in their places. Why were they not present to advise the House upon a Bill which was founded entirely upon technicalities? He wished to know whether the scheme was at this moment the law of the land? If the answer was in the affirmative, he would ask the Attorney General to show by reference to the Acts of Parliament on what he founded his opinion. If the answer was in the negative, what was the use of this Bill? What was the good of annulling an Order in Council which was itself a nullity? The Vice President indicated that the scheme was the law of the land. Then, in considering this Bill to amend the law, they were entitled to discuss the merits of the law.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I have already ruled on that point.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON submitted that as the scheme which the Bill would destroy was now stated to be part of the law of the land, they were entitled to discuss its merits.

*Mr. SPEAKER: This is a Bill for the purpose of removing an irregularity, and of giving the House an opportunity of discussing the merits of the scheme on a future day.

Mr. T. M. HEALY, on a point of order, called Mr. Speaker's attention to his ruling on this Bill on September 2, 1895. The Speaker then said:—

> "I have read the proposals of the Bill, and I cannot say that it is out of order for an hon. Member to refer to the scheme, but I hope he will not do so in more detail than is necessary."

And, later on, the Speaker said,

> "It appears to me the hon. Member is discussing the history, and not the merits, of the scheme,"

suggesting that it would be in order to discuss the merits.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I have not referred to "Hansard," and do not know in what context or under what circumstances those observations were made, but, having fully considered this Bill—I do not know whether it is the same Bill—I am clearly of opinion that the merits of the scheme cannot be discussed. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. E. ROBERTSON desired to point out the position in which the House was placed. This being a mere Bill to amend a departmental irregularity and to give the House an opportunity of again discussing an Order in Council, could have no possible effect upon the law of the land. If the Bill did not amend the law, its passage would leave the scheme in precisely the same legal status as now. This was a question on which the House was entitled to be advised by the Law Officers, and until they received that advice the House would be neglecting its duty if it took part in the ignominious farce of proceeding with a Bill, the real scope of which no one seemed to understand, and the issue of which would be the production of a mere nullity.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Boroughs) said that, if he rightly followed the right hon. Gentleman, his knowledge of the actual facts connected with the petition and the circumstances of its withdrawal was somewhat imperfect. Otherwise he could not understand when the right hon. Gentleman did not tell the House what were the circumstances which induced the gentlemen who withdrew their signatures to take that course. He would state what he understood to be the actual facts of the case. The Montgomeryshire County Council in due course adopted the Intermediate Education Act of 1889; and by so adopting it they took power to levy a halfpenny rate on the whole county. Proper education committees were formed, and, ultimately, a scheme for the carrying out of the Act in Montgomeryshire was adopted by the proper authorities. Part of the scheme involved the bringing into the general system of the county of the endowed school at Berriew. The matter went before the Charity Commission and the Education Department. Shortly before the time for petitioning had ended, a petition was sent up by 20 ratepayers in the parish of Berriew. This was done in pursuance of the Endowed Schools Act, 1873, which allowed not less than 20 ratepayers to petition against a scheme. The effect of the petition, if it was *bonâ fide*, was to make it incumbent upon the Department to lay the scheme on the Table of the two Houses of Parliament. But before anything further was done, 12 of the 20 ratepayers who had signed the petition withdrew their signatures. He would like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman in his researches had found that they stated their reasons for so doing. As a matter of fact, he understood that they made the reason of their withdrawal perfectly clear. It was this, that they had been induced to sign the petition by misrepresentations made by those concerned in getting it up. These gentlemen were told that if Berriew School was brought under the scheme there would be a halfpenny rate levied on the parish, while if the school was kept out they would escape the rate. That was an entirely inaccurate representation. Whether Berriew School was or was not brought within the scheme, the halfpenny rate would be levied on the parish just as in every other parish. He brought before the House a declaration signed by these twelve gentlemen in the presence of an impartial witness to the following effect: "We, the undersigned, hereby declare that we were induced to sign the petition against the Berriew School Scheme because we were told that the scheme would involve a rate." The Law Officers of the Crown advised that, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the signatures, the petition having been presented, the necessity arose for laying the scheme on the Table of the two Houses. In regard to that he would like to ask, was it stated in the case laid by the Department before the Law Officers that the petitioners, having signed, afterwards merely capriciously withdrew their signatures; or did the case state that the petitioners withdrew because of alleged misrepresentation? There was nothing in the Act of 1873 to take the whole of this machinery out of what might be called the general law of the land. And what he would submit to the Solicitor General was that fraud vitiated everything. If it was true that these 12 gentlemen were induced to sign the petition by misrepresentation, then the question that ought to have been submitted to the Law Officers was this. Assuming that these signatures were obtained by misrepresentation, was there any *bonâ fide* petition, from beginning to end. That was really the crux of the case. He submitted that this unprecedented Bill ought not to pass without most careful investigation into the facts, and as a possible solution he would recommend that the Debate might be adjourned in order that the right hon. Gentleman might inquire into the facts of the declaration he had brought before the House. Passing from that, he thought there was a great deal in the point made by the hon. Member for Louth. The nature of this procedure appeared to him to be judicial rather than executive. The promoters of a scheme of this kind had to go through a long and somewhat cumbrous form in order to obtain the ultimate Order in Council. The Order in Council was obtained here, and this scheme for Montgomeryshire, including the Berriew Scheme, was the law of the land. He said that was the case of a judgment, and that the matter was *res judicatæ*. What they were now asked to do by the Government was, in consequence of an accidental blunder on the part of the Education Department, to give judgment against the promoters of the scheme. Suppose this had been a judgment of the House of Lords in ordinary litigation, or of the Court of Appeal, the position of the Government would be, that because somebody at some initial stage of the proceedings had committed a blunder, therefore they could not discuss the merits, but were to set aside the judgment of the House of Lords or of the Court of Appeal. What practical reason had the Government shown for correcting this injustice? The Courts in England did not give a new trial, and did not set aside a judgment on mere technicalities unless there was substantial injustice involved. Where was the substantial injustice in this matter? And, above all, what did the Government mean to do? Did they mean to annul the scheme, or oppose it when it came before the House? The right hon. Gentleman spoke in a very pacific spirit, but he did not give any undertaking as to what might be the action of hon. Gentlemen behind him in the matter. Unless the Government were in earnest, and said, "We object to the scheme, and intend to oppose it," what was the practical good of re-opening the matter at all? Above all, when they found a great county like Montgomeryshire acting together in this matter, and only a few people in a particular parish who were really objecting to the consequence of this inadvertence—if they liked—what really was the practical need of going on with the Bill? For these reasons he should certainly oppose the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) remarked that the hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the judgments of the Courts could not be quashed by reason of any technicalities. He believed, if it was shown that material facts were withdrawn from the jury, then the judgment would be quashed.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES: What I said was that a new trial was not granted in the Courts of Justice on some technical grounds. There must be some substantial injustice done at the trial.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES entirely adopted that view, and said he was endeavouring to make the hon. Gentleman understand that a substantial injustice was done here. That injustice was that one of the parties was kept out of Court by an irregularity. He was going to support this Bill, though not entirely for the same reason that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University had given. In matters of this kind he had a plain rule on which he acted. He voted with his Party always when they were right, often when they were wrong, and invariably when he did not understand the question. Well, that was his position upon this occasion. He did not understand the merits of the Berriew School Scheme, but it seemed to him the merits of the scheme were not in question. What was in question were the merits of the Education Department in the year 1894, at a time when it was presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham. He thought any opposition that came to this Bill came with very ill grace from hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen the consorts of the right hon. Member for Rotherham. They, at any rate, ought to pay a high tribute of generosity to Her Majesty's Government for coming forward to cover their misdeeds; and he had been surprised that in the course of this Debate the culprit in whose real interests this Measure was introduced as a Bill of indemnity—that was the right hon. Member for Rotherham—had not himself risen to support the Government in bringing in this cloak for his wicked misdeeds. The right hon. Gentleman was the man who did it, and it was no use to tell them that this was a technical or slight irregularity. The Education Department had put over it one of the most eminent Members of the Party in power, for the very reason that it was a particularly difficult department to keep straight. Thus the right hon. Gentleman opposite was put in that position; otherwise he might have been made Minister for Foreign Affairs, or put into some other inferior position. But for the position of Vice President his Party recognised that they required a man of the highest ability, tremendous determination, industry and acumen, and that was why the right hon. Member for Rotherham was selected. In 1897 they were confronted with this blunder, which the right hon. Gentleman allowed to be made and as to which he was *particeps criminis.* The whole total effect of the Bill was to throw a cloak over the misdeeds of the Department. In his opinion, the misdeeds which ought never to be forgotten were the misdeeds of a public department. In this particular instance no kind of excuse could be made for pleading ignorance of the conditions of the Act of Parliament. The Department knew perfectly well it was necessary to lay the scheme upon the Table of the House. It knew that unless the scheme were so laid on the Table, a proper and final judgment could not be obtained upon it, and that unless that proper and final judgment was obtained the Order in Council would have been obtained by something not very distantly resembling fraud. With all this knowledge before it the Department deliberately omitted to perform its duty. As a result of that he should have thought the right hon. Gentleman himself would have introduced the Bill of indemnity which he and his Department required. But no; he and his Party left office, and it was reserved for the unfortunate victim, the scapegoat of the Committee of Council on Education—that secret body of whom they knew so very little—to bring in a Bill of indemnity to cover the misdeeds of the Department. He attached all the more importance to this kind of Bill of indemnity, because they were becoming daily more and more department ridden; and if, every time a Department made a mistake or committed a crime—and Departments were constantly doing both—they were to have, as a matter of course, a Bill of indemnity brought in—not even by the side guilty of the crime, but by the other side—he said that all security was lost. He was bound to support this Bill of indemnity, because he did not understand it, but he did so with misgivings, and he hoped it would be the last Measure of the kind that would be brought in.

Mr. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) believed the Vice President had stated all the facts, and the only reason why he rose was because the hon. Gentleman opposite had made a statement which he wished to correct, to the effect that he, knowing this to be illegal, deliberately failed in laying the matter on the Table of the House. In this case, and certainly in one former case, probably others, it was honestly believed by the officials of the Education Department, that a notification sent in at the last moment withdrawing certain signatures to it, did withdraw the petition. In this particular case the petition was withdrawn without his knowledge, and in accordance with the traditions of the Department. In the former case—the case of the Dauntsey Charity—great interest was taken in it by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No Bill was brought in in that case.

Mr. ACLAND replied that a new scheme was brought in, and a former Member of that House, now deceased, not being satisfied with the new scheme, presented a petition against it. Then his friends—and he believed the Under Secretary for the Home Department—induced him to persuade those who had signed it to withdraw their signatures to the petition. They did withdraw their signatures, and, in consequence, the scheme was not brought before the House. That was one of the precedents upon which the officials of the Education Department acted in the case of this Berriew Scheme. All he had to say was that when this matter was brought to his knowledge, and the point arose as to whether that was a legal act on the part of the Department, he at once saw that no course was open to him but to refer the matter, as a purely legal one, to the Attorney General and Solicitor General.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said every opportunity had been afforded for persons opposing this scheme to appear before the Joint Education Committee and submit any reasons showing that their interests would be unjustly affected. This Joint Committee was a body of five Members, of whom three were Churchmen and two Nonconformists. Further than that, the trustees, including the vicar, assented to the proposal. The twelve men who withdrew their signatures were induced to sign the petition by a false representation that a new rate would be the natural corollary of the passing of the scheme. A specific question he desired to put to the Government. The effect of passing this Bill would be that an opportunity would be offered of wrecking this scheme, and before the vote was taken he would like to know whether opposition to the scheme would be taken in this or in the other House, because that was of vital importance to the question at issue. Hon. Members, perhaps, did not know the inner history of this Bill. The House was not asked to pass it really and solely to remedy a technical mistake, that was not the real reason, and if there had not been a force behind working on the Education Department this Bill would never have been heard of. An article in the *National Review* for November, signed "A Layman," gave the reasons for the Bill. Referring to Measures which the writer hoped would pass he said:—

> "Among smaller Measures there is one called the Berriew School Bill, a short Bill to bring back within the cognisance of Parliament a scheme under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, which by accident was illegally passed, without proper time being given for consideration. The scheme is regarded by Churchmen as unfair to the Church"—

*Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. Member could not, after his ruling, proceed to argue on the merits of the scheme by quotation from and comment on an article in a periodical.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS said he would not pursue that line of argument, but the article went on to speak of the Bill about to be introduced and which was now under discussion, referring to the reasons why it should be brought forward. The article spoke of the failure of the Government to pass the Bill last year, and continued:—

> "To fulfil their promise, they introduced the Berriew School Bill, but it was opposed by Welsh Radical Members, and the Government, with a faintness of heart they had shown in other instances when Church interests were at stake, gave way, and abandoned the Bill."

And then the writer went on to hope that the Government would not give way to faintness of heart and desert Church interests during the Session. That was the view of supporters of the Bill, that it was introduced, not in order to remedy a technical mistake, but in order to keep from the parishioners interested an educational boon which would be granted to them under this scheme. This was why Welsh Members very heartily objected to the Second Reading of the Bill.

Mr. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham) said they had been told that, though passed by inadvertence, the Order in Council had all the force of law, and so far as the Berriew School was concerned, it was law, and he could not see the necessity for upsetting the scheme. If, as he did not doubt, the right hon. Gentleman was correct in his law, there did not appear to be any necessity for the Bill. The people of the parish of Berriew and the inhabitants of Montgomery were the best judges of their wants and wishes, and they had expressed these through their representatives and by petitions presented. It could not, of course, be expected that a parish would be absolutely unanimous, and, no doubt, two or three "cranks" would be found even in a Welsh parish, but they had practically shown their feeling in favour of the scheme, and as they were, in his opinion, entitled to a reasonable amount of autonomy in a matter of this kind, he should vote with the Welsh Members. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said Welsh Members were exceedingly obliged to the hon. Gentleman for his very sensible remarks in support of their view. As a general principle, he rather welcomed the ruling of the Law Officers that where signatures were withdrawn from the petition it ought necessarily to fall through, and another opportunity should be given to petition against a scheme. Would the Solicitor General explain what the ruling of the Law Officers really was?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) said perhaps the hon. Member would get his explanation from the hon. and learned Member for York, who, at the time, was Solicitor General under a Unionist Government. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. Herbert Roberts.

Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD (York) said he had the greatest possible pleasure in replying on behalf of the Government—[*laughter*]—that the opinion of the Law Officers was as the hon. Gentleman had stated. The view taken by Her Majesty's Government, and which, he presumed, had not altered since he left the Government—[*laughter*]—was that it would be inexpedient that it should be open to persons to put a collusive petition on record, and to leave it until the last moment and then to give notice that certain names were withdrawn which would prevent a certain number of *bonâ fide* petitioners from presenting a petition. That was the view of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he would like to know if that was the view of the present Law Officers?

Sir F. LOCKWOOD said he spoke for them. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said, then there was no necessity for the Bill at all, for there had been nothing to prevent the parishioners of Berriew from presenting a petition. The House ought to have some guidance from the present Law Officers. This was not a purely technical matter. The late Vice President of the Council had mentioned the Dauntsey case, a charity in Wilts, in which case signatures to a petition were withdrawn, and the then Vice President proceeded as if no petition had been presented, and the scheme became law. There was no Bill brought in on that occasion, and why was a distinction made in the present instance? If the present Government had been guilty of what the hon. Member for Lynn Regis called "misdeeds," they should make reparation, but they were not called upon to do so vicariously on behalf of the late Liberal Government. It was not true that one of the parties to this matter had not had an opportunity of presenting their case against this particular scheme. They had an opportunity first of all of raising their objections before the Joint Committee of Education, and then before the County Council of Montgomeryshire, but they did not take advantage of either of the opportunities afforded them. It was only at the last moment, by means of a false statement of fact—by what in law would amount to fraud—that 20 ratepayers were induced to sign a petition to the Education Department. It was known perfectly well that if the matter went to the House of Lords, where the facts were not known, it was only necessary to make the suggestion that this was an ecclesiastical question, to insure the scheme being upset without any regard whatever to its merits. This matter had been going on for three years, and during the whole of that time the parishioners of Berriew had been deprived of all the advantages of the intermediate education scheme for the county of Montgomery. In addition to that, if this Bill were passed, the matter would go on for another year or two, so that, probably for six years the parishioners of Berriew would be deprived absolutely of all the benefits of the intermediate scheme. That would be the result of annulling this scheme, while, in addition, they would be deprived of a sum of £300 which was simply awaiting the scheme being put into practical operation. He thought it was exceedingly unfair to the parishioners, and to those who were interested in Welsh education, and had been trying to perfect a system of secondary education, that these matters should be constantly brought before the House of Commons. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) said he had intended to be present during the whole of this Debate, but a meeting of the South African Committee, which had been taking place, required his attendance, and that was the reason for his absence from the House during the greater part of the proceedings. ["Hear, hear!"] He understood the point had been raised as to whether or not this scheme was law. He had no doubt whatever that the scheme was law. The Statute provided that, when an Order in Council had been passed, all the formalities should be deemed to have been observed, and the scheme had the force of an Act of Parliament. He should like just to remind the House of what was the necessity for this Bill. All he knew at the time that he went into the matter was that a petition, perfectly correct in form, and signed by qualified people, had been presented. The hon. Member below the gangway said that those signatures were obtained by some improper means. He knew nothing about that, and he was perfectly satisfied that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for York knew nothing of it. The petition having been presented, all the lawyers who looked into the matter came to the conclusion that there was the condition established which necessitated the scheme going before Parliament—that was to say, the subsequent withdrawal of the names, however obtained, did not prevent them from coming and asking the House to express its opinion upon it. That was in no sense a party opinion. The late Law Officers so advised the Member for Rotherham when he was Vice President, and it was his duty when he came into office, in 1895, to advise Her Majesty's Government that that view was correct. In the Dauntsey case, to which reference had been made, there actually was an objection taken in the House, and the ultimate settlement of that scheme was in consequence of the objections which were taken in that House to the scheme so laid on the Table of the House. The Dauntsey case was an instance of the right which any persons who objected to a scheme had to have the opinion of the House taken. Therefore the Dauntsey case was a distinct authority in favour of the view which they urged ought to be followed by the Education Department. But there having been this unintentional hitch, and persons having been deprived of their constitutional rights, he did not think any course could be adopted except to put the parties exactly in the position they ought to have been, and to allow objections to the scheme, if any existed, to be raised in a constitutional manner. It was a tardy act of justice, but it was an act of justice that ought to be performed. ["Hear, hear!"]

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 224; Noes, 102.—(Division List, No. 164.)

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now Read a Second time."

The House divided:—Ayes, 219; Noes, 88.—(Division List, No. 165.)

Bill Read a Second time.

Sir J. GORST moved, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc."

Mr. T. M. HEALY begged to move to leave out the words "the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.," and to insert instead thereof the words "a Select Committee." He said it was most important that they should have evidence, and if the Bill should be referred, as proposed, to the Grand Committee on Law, no evidence could be taken. ["Hear, hear!"] It was admitted that the original signatures to the petition were obtained not only by fraud, but by gross misrepresentations. Evidence on that point ought to be taken. The statements made on the other side had been controverted. The very fact that it was alleged that the motive which actuated the Government was that this was a question of hardship, called for evidence. At least, let them have evidence as to hardship. Then there was the question of precedent to be explained. Whenever it was proposed to refer some small Irish Bill to a Grand Committee, the First Lord of the Treasury got up and said, "You call this a small Bill, but it involves questions of the most enormous importance." They ought now to inquire whether, after the scheme had become the law of the land, under which parties had got vested rights, it should be set aside by *ex post facto* legislation. The Member for Rotherham said there was a precedent, and the Attorney General controverted that and said there was no precedent. It was very remarkable that they should get different advice from the two Front Benches, and yet they were asked to rush the Bill through at railroad speed. They must get at the facts, and not legislate in the dark. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS seconded the Amendment, and said that if evidence was not taken a grave injustice might be done to the people of Berriew. It was said that there had been a total misrepresentation of the facts. He had seen a document from 12 persons who signed the petition against the scheme, and what did they say? They said:—

> "We, the undersigned, hereby declare that we were induced to petition against the Berriew Bill because we were told that it would involve a rate."

Instead of taking money from the parish it would take money from the townships and put it into the parish. Under these circumstances it was necessary there should be an investigation.

Question, "That the words 'the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.,' stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 210; Noes, 95.—(Division List, No. 166.)

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved, "That this Bill be now Read a Second time." He said he would not detain the House very long, but, as an important change in the law was involved—["hear, hear!"]—he thought the Bill ought not to be again brought before the House without a statement of the grounds on which it was based. The subject was mooted 30 years ago or more, and during that time public opinion had been maturing. He did not wish to anticipate any arguments that might be advanced against the views he was about to lay before the House; but it was his honest conviction that not only in Great Britain, but in all civilised countries where the question had been discussed, and especially where there had been a change in the system of the law, it was the almost universal opinion that it was absolutely necessary, for the acquittal of innocent persons and the conviction of guilty persons, that the prisoner should be allowed to give evidence. ["Hear, hear!"] We had now for a considerable time been under two systems, and the opponents of the Bill themselves admitted that it was not possible for the two systems to continue, that we ought to admit we had been wrong in allowing prisoners to give evidence, in any cases, or that we ought to make the system uniform, and allow prisoners to give evidence, at their own desire, in any case. Between the years 1872 and 1895 from 25 to 30

Acts of Parliament had been passed relating to all kinds of offences. He could justify the Bill by reference to those Acts of Parliament alone, and he could show that in respect to those Acts no distinction could be drawn between the offences in which prisoners were now allowed to give evidence and those in which they were still prevented from giving evidence. No doubt hon. Members were alive to the absurdities of the present system. They had been pointed out by many authorities connected with the criminal law. He would content himself with one or two prominent cases, though he could mention 40 or 50. In trial for libel, if the question was whether the libel was or was not written by the defendant, the defendant could give evidence. But if a man were charged with sending a threatening letter, or with forgery, or with an attempt to extort money by writing letters, the defendant could not give evidence. Then, as to fraud, it was perfectly well known that exactly the same issues were tried in civil actions for fraud and in indictments for fraud and conspiracy. He could quote 10 or 11 cases within his own experience where sometimes the proceedings had been by way of indictment, and at others by way of civil action. The issues were identical, and the trial of them should be governed by the same conditions. But in the one case the defendant could not give any explanation of his conduct, and in the other he might go into the witness-box. As to cases of assault, there was a letter in *The Times* by Sir H. Poland, who, everyone would agree, was one of the greatest authorities on the criminal law, and who approached this question from an impartial point of view. Sir H. Poland pointed out that this absurd condition existed—that a man charged under the Criminal Law Amendment Act with a criminal assault could give evidence, while a man charged with a common assault could not give evidence. Again, in a charge of arson accused could not give evidence; but the man who was charged with a crime the moral guilt of which was the same—namely, with setting fire to his house in order to make a claim against an insurance company—could give evidence. He could multiply these instances four or five-fold, in which the same issues of moral guilt were raised, and in which there was no reason why evidence should not be given by the persons charged. In fact, he believed that it would lead to the acquittal of innocent persons in cases where they had been unjustly charged. And at this point he would mention another anomaly removed by the Bill—the anomaly which prevented a wife from giving evidence for her husband. The absurdity of this rule was well known. He had known cases where a man and woman had been living together as man and wife, though they had not gone through the ceremony of marriage, and where the woman had been allowed to give evidence for her paramour; whereas, where there had been a lawful marriage, the wife was not allowed to give evidence on behalf of her husband. A greater absurdity could not be suggested. When he had pressed this question on public opinion he had often been asked, Do you know of any cases in which innocent persons had been convicted? He hoped that the cases were rare, but he was perfectly convinced that they did exist, and in many cases had occurred, because innocent persons had not been able to give evidence. The late Lord Chief Justice had a strong opinion on this matter, and he would quote a case which had been commented on in connection with him. An elderly gentleman—whose name need not be mentioned publicly—who had long been in business, was charged with fraud in connection with a company, was indicted before Baron Pollock, was tried and convicted, and underwent six weeks or two months' imprisonment. After that a civil action was brought and tried before the late Lord Coleridge, the plaintiff being represented by Sir Charles Russell, and the defendant by the present Attorney General. Sir C. Russell opened powerfully a case of fraud, which was apparently unanswerable, and the late Chief Justice more than once suggested whether there could be any answer. Nevertheless, the case for the defence was opened, and the person who had been convicted and imprisoned was examined in the box, with the result that the Lord Chief Justice completely changed his opinion on that man's evidence alone, and the jury stopped the case, saying that there was no fraud of any kind. When this subject was being debated in the House of Lords the late Lord Chief Justice called attention to the case, and said that it confirmed him in the opinion that in the interests of innocent men this change should take place. Sir H. Poland stated that he could count not a few cases where there had been a failure of justice, because the defendant could not give evidence. But, what was more remarkable, he had it from Judges and from counsel, that in their opinion not a few persons would have been convicted under the very Acts he had mentioned if they had not been able to give evidence. In the Australian colonies, in Canada, in the United States—wherever the two systems had been in force—opinion was unanimously in favour of the proposed change in the law. He would ask those who wished to study this question to read a letter in *The Times* of June 6 last year, from one of the Judges in New South Wales, Sir William Windeyer. He said that he had had five years' experience of the new system, which he had approached with reluctance because he thought the opportunity of giving evidence might be a snare to nervous, innocent persons. But his opinion had completely changed, and he was now satisfied that it was not a snare at all, but that innocent persons, though nervous, had been able to show that they were innocent. This Judge added that, having tried a great many important cases, he would now be unwilling to try an important case in which the prisoner was not allowed to give his own account of the case. A series of questions were in 1877 propounded to the colonies, and to the United States, and, with one exception, the experience of Chief Justices and of Attorney Generals of States was favourable to the change, which they said, gave general satisfaction and occasioned no hardship or injustice to the prisoner. The House would agree that by what he had already said a strong case had been made out for a change in the law, so as to allow the person who knew most about the case to give evidence if he desired. He was sure the House would be influenced by the opinions on this subject of the very distinguished men who had passed away. The late Sir James Stephen altered his opinion in the latter part of his life, and expressed himself strongly in favour of this change; Lord Coleridge also expressed the strongest opinion in the like sense, and so had Lord Bramwell and Lord Selborne, and many other distinguished lawyers. And, coming to living Judges, Lord Herschell had spoken most strongly in favour of the change; Mr. Justice Mathew, Mr. Justice Wills, Lord Justice Lopes—he might refer to almost every Judge on the Bench, for he knew no Judge who held a different opinion. Mr. Justice Mathew, at Manchester, used particularly strong language when he said it seemed extraordinary to go on closing the mouth of the man who knew most about the matter. Mr. Justice Wills, who always strongly felt the responsibility resting upon him in trying prisoners, said that from his long experience he was of opinion that the ability to give evidence was an advantage to an innocent man, but not to the guilty man. What had been the Parliamentary history of the question? There had scarcely been a Session in which such a Bill had not been read a Second time in the House of Lords and sent down to this House. He knew no public question which had excited so little opposition or so little adverse public criticism. The Bill was slightly different from those of former years. One important question arose at once; and that was whether or not prisoners, if they elect to give evidence, should be subjected to the ordinary cross-examination, and attempts were made by himself and others in earlier years to meet that point by inserting words to the effect that a man should not be cross-examined in regard to his past history unless it formed part of the chain of evidence in connection with the trial. He was opposed by many lawyers, including Lord Selborne and Lord Bramwell, who urged that it was not right to throw any immunity around a person accused. Upon principle, there was a great deal to be said for that view. He had asked many Judges whether they found that the power of cross-examination had worked hardly to the prisoner who had given evidence, and they one and all said it had not. It seemed better to have one uniform and simple code of law; and, speaking for those Courts of which he had had a long experience, he did not believe our Judges would ever allow the position of a prisoner to be prejudiced, or the licence of counsel to go too far in the matter of the examination or cross-examination of prisoners. He assured the House it was with regret that he had felt it necessary for Parliamentary reasons to exclude Ireland from the operation of the Bill. He wished to be frank. He was extremely anxious to see this amendment of the law passed—[*cheers*]—and knowing what the difficulties were in regard to Parliamentary procedure, he was afraid he was influenced rather by considerations of prudence than by his own opinion as to what would be best. He wished to say as publicly as he could to hon. Members from Ireland that he dissociated himself altogether from a suggestion once made in this House—[Mr. T. M. Healy: "By Lord James!"]—that prosecutions were conducted in Ireland in a way which was not as fair to the prisoner as in England. It was not for any reason of that kind that he had felt it necessary to exclude Ireland. But he did not discount the powers of eloquence and amendment of hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, and he felt, therefore, that, unwilling as he was to draw any distinction between the two countries, the more prudent course was to bring in the Bill in its present shape. He believed the change proposed was urgently demanded, and he was satisfied that the extension of the privilege which now existed under 26 Acts of Parliament to other similar offences was in the interests of the innocent, and would lead to justice being done. Since the Bill was introduced a few weeks ago he had received a very large number of letters and representations from all classes of people in the community, from most important bodies, such as the Incorporated Law Society, as well as from men of all shades of opinion politically, in favour of the change and not a single objection or protest against it. He begged to move the Second Reading.

*Mr. J. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.) proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." He said that, whatever might be said for or against the Bill, it could not be seriously denied that there was a strong body of opinion at the Bar, amongst men who had had extensive experience in the criminal Courts, entirely opposed to the views which the Attorney General had put before the House. Compared with former Bills this was by far the worst which had ever been introduced upon the subject. Most other Bills showed some consideration for the prisoner, but this Bill did not. The present practice was perfectly satisfactory. If uniformity was to be introduced it ought to be in the direction, not of extending the facilities to prisoners to give evidence, but of curtailing them. There had been no serious demand for a change in the law. The law was respected, for 80 per cent. of the persons charged on indictments were convicted. The Bill would be made use of by prosecuting counsel and solicitors to force a prisoner into the witness-box in order to supply a missing link in the chain of evidence for the prosecution. The principle of our criminal law was the assumption of a man's innocence until he was proved to be guilty, but this Bill would entirely alter that. When a prisoner went into the witness-box he would be cross-examined about all kinds of things, and elements of prejudice would be introduced into the case which would be enlarged upon before the jury, and the prisoner would run the additional risk of making a very unfavourable impression. He might wish to conceal something, although not guilty of the offence with which he was charged, and it would then be urged to the jury that he had not told the truth. The jury would balance the probabilities of the case as they did at present at a *nisi prius* case. A man might for various reasons say what was not true in the course of his evidence, but that was no reason why he should be convicted of an offence of which he was innocent. The late Lord Justice Lush used to say that a prosecuting counsel in this country ought to act in a semi-judicial capacity. He agreed with that, but he had been long enough in the profession to know that that principle had been very much departed from, and there was an amount of heat put into prosecutions in these days which he could not help thinking would astonish Lord Justice Lush if he were alive. ["Hear, hear!"] Then, if the prisoner did not go into the witness-box damaging inference would be drawn, and a jury would very often convict a man simply for that reason. He referred to a case in which a serious charge impugning his honour was brought against a Member of that House, and he brought an action for libel to vindicate his character. That Gentleman was advised by his counsel not to go into the witness-box because it was not part of his business to refute the charges, inasmuch as those charges had to be established by the person who made them. What did the judge and jury do in that case? They drew their conclusion from his absence from the witness-box, which was positively fatal to him, and had the most injurious consequences on his reputation. [An HON. MEMBER: "That was not a criminal case."] There was the same objection whether it was a criminal or a civil case, and therefore the argument was a sound one. They were not dealing only with assizes, at which a Judge would preside, but with Quarter and Petty Sessions, and though his personal experience of Quarter Sessions did not justify him in making any suggestion that Chairmen of Quarter Sessions would not act fairly, he had one or two cases in his mind in which he should have been sorry to see the prisoner at the mercy of certain Chairmen of Quarter Sessions. There was a case about a year ago where the Chairman did not even allow the jury to say if the prisoner was guilty or not, but merely asked them whether the man had taken the article with the theft of which he was indicted. That case came before the Court of Crown Cases Reserved, and the conviction was quashed. What chance would a prisoner have at the hands of a man like that? He had had a conversation some time ago with a learned Judge of the High Court, who informed him that he never looked at the record of previous convictions until the verdict of the jury had been given, because, said he, if he knew that the prisoner had been previously convicted on several occasions it might unconsciously influence him in summing up the case to the jury. But under the operation of this Bill a prisoner might be examined as to his previous record and character, and the jury would thus be informed of facts of which even a Judge thought it best to remain in ignorance, and this would very likely influence the jury in their verdict, and a prisoner might be deprived of the benefit of the doubt. The result of this Bill, if it became law, would be that juries would convict prisoners on side issues, whereas now there was one plain question before them, namely, whether the prosecution had proved the guilt of the person charged beyond all reasonable doubt. He had a strong objection to the Bill. It would lead to endless perjury. Day after day, in the police courts, the Courts of Quarter Sessions, and Assizes, men would go into the witness-box and commit perjury and no one would take the slightest notice of it, and that would have a most injurious public effect. In his opinion this change in the law would not have the effect of saving the innocent people from being convicted, and he did not believe it would increase the number of convictions. He concluded by moving the rejection of the Bill.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) seconded the Amendment. The Attorney General, he said, spoke again and again of the prisoner electing to give evidence, and of a privilege being bestowed on the prisoner. In form the Bill was permissive, but it was obvious that in practice it would be compulsory. The Attorney General had also referred to the series of Acts, beginning in 1872, which ran counter to the general rule of law in admitting the prisoner as a witness. If those Acts were examined, he thought it would be found that, with one or two exceptions, the offences to which they related were far more analogous to torts than to crime. The Conspiracy Act of 1875 deliberately drew a distinction between the two systems, which the Attorney General said could not go on together without absurdity. By the Conspiracy Act it was provided, in regard to a breach of contract, that a prisoner might be a witness, but with regard to offences to which Section 7 related—namely, intimidation, that same provision was not made. He admitted in the abstract the proposition that the prisoner should be a competent witness on his own behalf was most plausible, but sufficient consideration had not been given to show how this abstract principle would work in the common experience of the Courts. The Attorney General quoted the authority of distinguished lawyers; but with all respect to them, he should like to ask what was the opinion of the rank and file of the men who practised at the criminal Bar? This question had been much discussed in the robing rooms and at the Bar messes, and, from observation and inquiry, he did not hesitate to say that the large majority of the rank and file of men who practised at the criminal Bar were opposed to the change now proposed. Their opinion was at least as much entitled to consideration as the opinion of great and eminent Queen's Counsel, who very rarely condescended to visit a criminal Court at all, and when they did, sometimes displayed a great ignorance of criminal procedure. But the advocates of this reform were not agreed on the very crux of this case, which was:—"Is the prisoner to be subjected to ordinary cross-examination, or are restrictions to be put on that cross-examination?" That was not a detail which could be settled in Committee. It was the very essence of the case, and went to the root of the matter. The public at large, and the majority of the members of the Bar who advocated the reform, did not contemplate that the prisoner, when in the box, should be subjected to the same kind of cross-examination as the ordinary witness was subjected to. Reference had been made to the hon. and learned Member for York (Sir F. Lockwood). But the hon. and learned Gentleman had said on a previous occasion that "prisoners ought to be protected from cross-examination as to previous convictions," because if this protection were not afforded the old offender could never get off. Apparently the Government were themselves at odds on this question, because when the Lord Chancellor introduced his Bill last year there were very material restrictions on the cross-examination of the prisoner. Had the Lord Chancellor changed his opinion since last year, and if so, on what grounds? He admitted that the Bill of the Government was a perfectly logical Bill. What the public did not understand, and what the Bar did not understand, was this. There was no half-way house between excluding a prisoner from the witness-box altogether and submitting his evidence to the same tests as those which were applied to an ordinary witness. Speaking last year in the House of Lords the Lord Chief Justice said that where once a witness was admitted to give evidence on oath it was possible, by the artificial restraint which the Bill sought to impose, to protect him from the ordinary tests. On what grounds had the Bill been put before the House? On the ground that persons who were guilty sometimes escaped. If that was so, he conceived that persons were occasionally acquitted who would, under this Bill, if they went into the box, be convicted. Was the Bill for the protection of the innocent, or supposed innocent, persons? They were told that the prisoner's mouth was closed. That was an exploded fallacy. Under the practice now established in England the prisoner had four distinct opportunities of telling his own story: (1) when arrested; (2) when formally charged at the police court; (3) at the end of the magisterial proceedings; and (4) upon the trial itself. But to submit to examination and cross-examination would not necessarily be advantageous to an innocent man. The advantage would not depend nearly so much on the prisoner's innocence as upon his coolness and self-possession. Coolness and self-possession were largely associated with education, and therefore the Bill would give to the educated man a great advantage over the uneducated man. It was the ignorant man charged with a criminal offence who most needed to be guarded. It must have been observed by every counsel who had practised in the criminal courts that an ignorant man, however innocent such a man might be, had a great tendency to tell lies about comparatively immaterial facts. He generally invented some stupid fiction, easily exposed by cross-examination or contradicted by direct testimony. When such a man was exposed by cross-examination the discredit attached to part of the story which he had invented would be extended by the jury to the whole of his case, and he would stand in very serious jeopardy of being convicted, although innocent. The learned Attorney General had supported this Bill on another ground. He had talked about the hardship under the existing law of excluding the evidence of prisoners and their wives, and he had told again the story with the edifying moral, of the man who escaped from the gallows because the woman with whom he lived was not his wife. These stories had been in circulation in Bar robing rooms and Bar messes any time these last fifty years. He should like to put against them the deliberate opinion of a gentleman who—now that Sir H. Poland had retired—might be said to have had as large an experience at the Criminal Bar as any man in the country, Mr. Horace Avory, who, speaking of his experience of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and analogous Acts, said he had never known a person to be improperly convicted because of his inability to go into the witness-box, and when prisoners who had given evidence had been convicted, the same result would have followed if they had not given evidence on their own behalf. ["Hear, hear!"] He himself objected mainly to the Bill because of what he believed would be its effect on the Bench and the magistracy of the country. This change must impair the dignity of the Bench, and if he was told that that after all was only a grace or ornament, and not a matter of first importance, he joined issue, and said that the dignity of the Bench was inextricably involved with its impartiality. If this Bill became law, in numberless cases the Judges must cross-examine prisoners. From time to time he had seen a Judge on the Bench wrestle with witnesses for the defence, and with scarcely a pause proceed to sum up. This was not an edifying scene, but such scenes would be mutiplied a thousandfold if this Bill became law, with the aggravating circumstances that the person with whom Judge or Magistrate would have to wrestle would not be the prisoner's friend, but the prisoner himself. The bulk of prosecutions—or Court briefs as they were called—in this country were conducted by inexperienced counsel, and in many cases by young men just called to the Bar. The defence was almost invariably conducted by an able and experienced counsel acquainted with every twist and turn in criminal practice, and specially skilled in playing on the jury. The prisoner under this Bill would go into the box, and with the skilful aid which his counsel would be able to supply, tell his story and make a great impression on the jury. Then the young man just called to the Bar, to whom the Court brief had been entrusted, rose to cross-examine the prisoner. It was obvious to everybody in Court that he was incompetent to do so. His cross-examination was not only useless, but, with the ill-luck which dogged the steps of the inexperienced cross-examiner, he strengthened the impression, already favourable to the prisoner, made in the minds of the jury. The interests of justice must not be defeated, and the Judge would be obliged himself to assume the function of prosecutor and cross-examine the prisoner exactly in the way most familiar to him while a counsel at the Bar. Such scenes must be reproduced again and again at the Central Criminal Court, the Assizes, and Quarter Sessions throughout the country, and when that had become established, the dignity of the Bench would have disappeared, and with its dignity its impartiality. This change in the law was bitterly opposed by the Nationalist Members from Ireland, mainly, he believed, because of the exasperated feelings between class and class in that country due to the long-continued existence of the land question. But the labour question had often caused bitter feelings between class and class in England. He believed we were on the verge of considerable conflict in the Criminal Courts with regard to labour questions and the law of conspiracy. He hoped Labour Members would seriously consider the effect of this change in the law in regard to labour questions, and whether it was in the interests of justice that members of trades unions, who might be ignorant men, should be compulsorily put into the box and "pulled about" either by a magistrate at Quarter Sessions or Petty Sessions. If the change proposed by this Bill was made at all, it ought not to be made by itself, but be part of a larger attempt to reform the criminal law of this country. We were making still further approximation of criminal to civil proceedings. In civil proceedings there should be a Court of Criminal Appeal in this country. In all the countries in which the prisoner was a competent witness, there was, as far as his memory served him, a Court of Criminal Appeal. He should divide the House against the Second Reading of this Bill, because he submitted that the learned Attorney General had not made out a case for the Bill, and, still more, because he felt that the inevitable effect of the Bill would be to impair the great and historic position of the Bench of this country. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said that on this important question he differed in opinion from many whose opinions he highly valued. The Bill proposed a revolution in the criminal law, and he felt bound to state his own views, to act upon them, and, as far as they were of any use, to give the House the benefit of his experience. He felt indebted to the learned Attorney General for one observation he made. He stated the reason why he excluded Ireland from the great benefits which were to be brought about by the changes in the criminal law proposed by this Bill, and he was glad he dissociated himself from the very unworthy attack made by a late Member of the House, now a Member of a more august assembly, when a Bill similar to this was before the House in 1888. He, himself, was not then a Member of this House, but, in the course of his profesional duties he had considerable experience in the administration of justice in Ireland—["hear, hear!"]—and he must say that the remarks of the hon. and learned Member, as he then was, showed about the same knowledge of the administration of the criminal law in Ireland as he had courage in carrying out his convictions in that House. He, himself, since then, had had an opportunity of contrasting the administration of the criminal law in Ireland with the administration of the criminal law in England, and he could most honestly and truly say that, if there was any difference as regarded fairness of trial, the difference was certainly in the prisoners' favour in Ireland as compared with England. In ordinary cases in Ireland he had seldom, if ever, known a Crown prosecutor do what was almost invariably done in this country—namely, make two speeches against the prisoner. He was glad that the Bill was not to apply to Ireland, but thought that the reason assigned for that by the Attorney General was a most shadowy one. In 1888, when a similar Bill was brought in, the present Solicitor General expressed the opinion that it would be a mistake to exclude Ireland and to have one law for one part of the kingdom and another law for another part. Before the introduction of this Bill the hon. and learned Member for Louth asked whether Ireland would be included in its operation, and the Attorney General replied that he would consult the Attorney General for Ireland. The result was that Ireland was excluded. It looked very much as if the Government had been frightened by the threats of the hon. and learned Member for Louth, and a Government with a majority of 150 ought surely not to be influenced by such a cause. The administration of the criminal law had largely contributed to the welfare of the country and the diminution of crime. The administration of the law had been effective, and the law itself had been respected. That being the case, they ought to be very cautious about introducing changes in it. He did not believe that there was any public demand for this Bill, and denied that the great body of the profession were in favour of it. Law Officers and ex-Law Officers and Judges might approve it, but even among such high authorities opinions differed. In 1879 there was a Commission to consider the subject, consisting of very able English and Irish Judges, and they reported that they were divided in opinion as to the policy of so important a change in the law. Yet in that House, Law Officers had frequently asserted that this was a matter upon which practically everybody agreed. The present Bill went much further than any previous proposals of the kind. In fact the rate at which Ministerial attempts to make changes in the criminal law progressed was rather astonishing. The Bill was a most insidious one; it was put forward as a Measure to enable an innocent man to give evidence, and the Attorney General, with a persuasiveness against which it behoved them to be on their guard, had said that no prisoner need give evidence if he should not wish to do so. That, of course, might be the intention of the framers of the Bill, but as a matter of fact, if the Measure passed, every man on trial for his life would be obliged to present himself for examination and cross-examination; for if he should not do so the prosecuting counsel would at once say, "I am told that from the facts given in evidence you will be asked to draw a different inference from that which I ask you to draw." But who can tell us better than the prisoner himself what inference ought to be drawn, and why is he not called? In making this change they would really be introducing the French system, under which a prisoner was not only cross-examined by the prosecuting counsel, but also by the Judge. The Attorney General said that the proposed system prevailed with success in our colonies. In the Colonial Acts, which he had been able to refer to, he found safeguards which were not found in this Bill. In South Australia, for example, it was provided:—

> "that no presumption of guilt shall be made from the fact of such person electing not to give evidence. The Crown shall not be entitled to a right of reply by reason of such person having given evidence."

In New Zealand the law was that if a person charged with an offence should refrain from giving evidence or calling the husband or wife as a witness, such person should not be prejudiced thereby, and no comment prejudicial to him or her should be based thereon. If he was right in saying that this Bill would make it necessary for the prisoner in every case to give evidence, let them consider what that would lead to. The wealthy prisoner would be represented by able counsel, and an able solicitor would have considered whether it was in his favour or against him that he should be produced, and if he were produced, would take care that he got fair play. The educated prisoner would probably be able to think out in his own mind the evidence he should give and the proper method of giving it. But the man for whom he pleaded was the poor, uneducated prisoner, who was not protected by counsel or solicitor. He could conceive nothing that would lead to greater injustice than that an ignorant, undefended man should without a moment's notice be requested to present himself in the witness-box, and, having told his illiterate rigmarole, to subject himself to cross-examination by the counsel for the Crown. How would this unfortunate man go into the witness-box? A *primâ facie* case must have been made out before the Magistrate; and a true Bill must have been found against him by the Grand Jury; and he would go into the box with the knowledge that unless there had been suspicious circumstances he never would have found himself in that predicament at all. Did the House believe that in these circumstances he would get as fair a chance as he had under the present system? Unlike previous Bills, this Measure in no wise limited the right of cross-examination; and every one of the suspicious circumstances surrounding a prisoner would be paraded one after another by the cross-examining counsel. The fact that a man had been previously convicted might be the real reason why he was arrested, and he did not in such a case think a prisoner was likely to get a fair trial if counsel were able to cross-examine him with regard to his former offences. The question as to the effect of a prisoner's evidence would depend vastly more upon whether he made what was called a good witness than upon whether he was innocent or guilty, and an ignorant prisoner would find himself at the greatest disadvantage from the fact that he was unable properly to express himself. Many instances were known in which men had so expressed themselves as to leave their statements open to an inference entirely different to that which they meant to convey. The question of impropriety of expression had put many a witness both in civil and in criminal cases at the greatest possible disadvantage, and in regard to confessions made by prisoners on or before arrest. Constructions had very often been put upon expressions used by prisoners which upon mature consideration and further investigation they had been held not properly to bear. Let them take the case of a prisoner on his trial for his life. What must be the nervous feeling of that man as he walked out of the dock to the witness-box, knowing that the question whether he was to be hanged on that day month depended upon the evidence he was about to give? It was impossible for any ordinary man to have complete control of his senses or to do himself justice in such circumstances. The Attorney General said the Judge would take care that the limits of cross-examination were not exceeded. But cross-examination was not a matter depending upon the Judge; it was conducted upon well-defined rules; and they must under the Bill have cross-examination in its ordinary sense or not at all. Everybody had been agreed up to this year that if this great change were to be conceded at all, it must be accompanied with very great safeguards to the man who submitted himself to cross-examination. But now they were to have cross-examination unlimited as to every detail in his past life, which might prejudice the jury. As had been said, it would be looked upon as an outrage by every Judge if cross-examining counsel referred to the calendar of previous convictions against any prisoner. What was to be said of a weak case presented by the Crown being supplemented by the previous criminal history of the man supposed to be having a fair trial? The only result of all this was that they were putting an end to the theory that had been the great safeguard of the citizens of this country for centuries—namely, that the Crown must independently prove their case, and that if they were not able to do so the prisoner was to have the benefit of the doubt. Assuming what he himself did not believe, that the prisoner would have the slightest protection in regard to cross-examination from the Judge, what did the Attorney General say to those cases in which serious trials were heard—and their number were increasing daily under Acts of Parliament—before magistrates alone? In those cases they would not often have the skilled and responsible counsel who, no doubt, felt a sense of his responsibility and the obligation thrown upon him in the investigation of the trial he was called upon to conduct, but they would have practitioners in out-of-the-way places not in the least guided by public opinion, and who had not got the same high principles of honour in relation to the Bar which had always been traditional in Great Britain and Ireland. They would have these practitioners almost utterly irresponsible, and certainly not responsible to public opinion, allowed all the privileges and licence of cross-examination, not according to the rules laid down by the High Court, but according to the sweet will of the particular magistrate who happened to try the case. ["Hear, hear!"] That would most assuredly be a matter which before many years were over, if the Bill passed in its present form, would bring the law into the contempt and hatred of the people of this country. ["Hear, hear!"] Take the case of a murder trial where the very life of a man depended upon the truth and falsity of the various statements that had been put forward. He asked the Attorney General and other members of the legal profession, what would be their feelings when they were bringing into play against an unfortunate man who might be hanged that day month all the skill and artifices of the trained lawyer in the cross-examination of a man tried on such a charge? ["Hear, hear!"] He thought counsel would look upon such obligations as were thus thrown upon him with horror and that the country would revolt against any such practice being introduced into the criminal law. He hoped this matter would really be reconsidered. There was also, to his mind, the great objection that a prisoner submitting himself to cross-examination would leave himself open to be also examined by the Judge. No one had greater confidence in the Judges of this country and of Ireland than he; but after all they were human beings. It was frequently the case that, after a trial had proceeded a short time, the Judge made up his mind more or less in a particular direction and, while the jury might discard questions put on one side or the other or the inferences to be drawn from the answers, they would never do so in the case of the questions put by a Judge, because they rightly believed he was put there to do justice between the parties. If they were to subject a prisoner to this method of cross-examination and investigation of the facts by the Judge, how far would they be away from the French system, which they in this country detested? ["Hear, hear!"] Having had considerable experience in the Criminal Courts for many years, he declared that he had never yet seen what he could call to mind as any suggested miscarriage of justice by reason of a prisoner not being allowed to be called as a witness. ["Hear, hear!"] There might be a stray case here and there, for nobody supposed their system or any that could be invented would be absolutely perfect. But were they sure these cases would not be vastly outnumbered in a short time, when the prisoner was subjected to cross-examination in matters as to which he had never been so subjected before? He hoped the House would pause before allowing such a momentous change to be made. As to the clause which not only enabled but compelled the wife of a prisoner to give evidence, suppose a man was put on trial for his life, would the country really expect that his wife was to come up and do her best to have him hanged? If a poor woman in this sore trouble came up and stated something that was false in order to try and save her husband, would the country tolerate that she should afterwards be prosecuted and sent to gaol for thus trying to assist him? Far better was it that an occasional guilty man or woman should get off than that their law should be strained to that extremity. ["Hear, hear!"] That was the second, and to his mind, the serious part of the Bill. Not only had it never been proposed in that House, but it had never been recommended by any Commission of Judges or others, that he was aware of, and it was certainly a somewhat startling fact that it had remained for a so-called Conservative Party to be the first to put forward these proposals in so extreme and stringent a manner, making revolutionary changes in the law. Their law had worked well; it had been effective and respected, and he did not think this Bill would be any improvement. But that was not the question. There was no public demand for this change; they were not certain what the result would be, and, at all events, when they had good laws which were working well and justly, let them pause before they made a change and took a leap in the dark which might be disastrous. ["Hear, hear!"]

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

MR. THOMAS BUCKNILL (Surrey, Epsom) said it was not because he thought that, in this country, according to the present administration of their law, innocent people were convicted, or that guilty people were very often acquitted, that he spoke in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill. It was because he thought there was a certain feeling in the country that the administration of the law was not as perfect as it might be, and that, by the admission of the evidence of accused persons, when they so desired it, not otherwise, the administration of the criminal law would be improved. He was opposed to the compulsion of calling a husband or a wife of an accused person to give evidence, but for the moment he confined his remarks to whether the accused person should or should not be allowed to give evidence in his own favour if he so desired it. He did not believe that the innocent man who got into the witness-box of his own free will would ever be caught or entrapped or bullied by either counsel or Judge into admitting a state of circumstances which was not true. But if perchance, by nervousness or ignorance, an accused person should not do himself or herself justice, he thought a jury would be sufficiently discriminating to know the difference between a stupid and confused witness who was telling the truth and a lying prevaricator who, being guilty, was not telling the truth. He was not afraid of an innocent person being caught, but if a guilty individual should get off by his or her own cleverness and devices and perjury, better that a great deal than that an innocent person's mouth should be shut when by his opening it the whole truth might be known. ["Hear, hear!"] Let them take the case of a man arrested for being in possession of stolen goods. The police would ask him, "Where did you get the goods?" and he might say, "I bought them." "Of whom?" "I do not know his name, but I bought them at such and such a place." It was almost incredible that our law allowed the constable to give the statement made by the accused person to him and did not allow the accused person in the Court to say anything on oath with respect to that statement. ["Hear, hear!"] Again, there was the case of obtaining goods by false pretences. In such a case the Judge had to lay down to the jury that most technical rule which was called a statement of a non-existing fact. The accused was obliged to listen to the prosecutor and was not able to give his own version of the story. In most cases the best evidence was to be obtained from the person who stood in the dock, but who, at the present time, to use an expression found in a book well known, was law gagged. ["Hear, hear!"] Writing to *The Times* last year, Sir William Windeyer maintained that everybody in the Australian Colonies was now convinced that it was a good Amendment of the law to allow accused persons to give evidence. In the United States of America accused persons were permitted to give evidence on their own behalf, and the system had been found to work well. Why should not the change be tried here? Personally, he believed the alteration would work beneficially. No greater master of the criminal law had been known for the last 30 or 40 years than the late Recorder of London—Russell Gurney; he was a man of infinite wisdom and of absolute justice and tenderheartedness, and, speaking in the House of Commons in 1876, he said he had often felt when he entertained doubts about a case that they would have been entirely removed if he could have put, in no unkind or ungenerous spirit, a few questions to the prisoner. He would not however, give a Grand Jury, who were an inquisitorial body, and as a rule not lawyers, power to interrogate prisoners; and another important point was how far they should allow prisoners to be cross-examined at the sweet will of anybody engaged in a case. Moreover, he did not think a prisoner, if he presented himself for examination, ought to be cross-examined as to any previous conviction. ["Hear, hear!"] Again, as in the case of nearly all the United States of America, no observation should be permitted to be made by the presiding Judge prejudicial to a prisoner because he did not choose to offer to give evidence. There was another part of the Bill to which he took some exception. He did not understand the Government taking such a revolutionary step as to compel a husband to give evidence against his wife or the wife against her husband. He admitted that if they treated the matter logically it should be so, but the law was not always logical. [*Cheers.*] If they were to complain of anomalies there would be little hope for some of them. There was some nebulous safeguard, but they must do one thing or the other. To be logical, they would have to compel the husband and wife to give evidence against each other. Had the Attorney General changed his mind, and, if so, when did he do it? In 1894, in introducing a Bill for the prevention of cruelty to children, what did he provide? That in any proceedings against anyone under that Act the wife or husband would be "competent, but not compellable," to give evidence. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that the proposal in the Bill would cause great misery and trouble in that class of society which sent most of the cases to Quarter Sessions and Assizes. He believed a great blot would be removed by allowing a man or woman, if they thought fit to do so, to give evidence. He should support the Second Reading in the hope that the words compelling the husband or wife to give evidence would be omitted.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said there was a grave difference of opinion among the Bar on this subject, and he should not like to say on which side the balance of feeling lay. He was sorry that a larger number of Members were not present to hear the speech of the Member for Dublin University. The Bill, it was true, did not apply to Ireland, but it applied to the trial of Irishmen in England, and some most painful scenes had been witnessed at the trials of Irish prisoners before English Courts in that limited number of cases where prisoners were allowed to give evidence. In the vast majority of cases the fact that a prisoner was an Irishman told against him. [*Ministerial cries of* "No, no!"]

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, certainly not. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. KNOX said the jury watched the prisoner giving his evidence in his Irish way and accent, and there could not be a doubt that there was a prejudice. [*Loud cries of dissent.*] He could only say that that was his experience.

*Mr. A. K. LOYD (Berks, Abingdon): It is exactly the other way.

Mr. KNOX: I can only speak from my own experience.

*Mr. LOYD: Where? Name one instance.

Mr. KNOX: It is my experience that there is, to some extent, a prejudice against him on account of his race and nationality. The hon. and learned Member opposite, who had been in the position to try Irish prisoners, might have some difficulty in understanding—

Mr. DARLING (Deptford): I never tried an Irishman, and was referring to cases of witnesses.

Mr. KNOX said he was referring to a case where an Irish prisoner might be called upon to give evidence, but it was hardly necessary to elaborate it. It would be a serious injury to prisoners in the vast majority of cases to be compelled to give evidence. If the object of criminal procedure was to obtain convictions this Bill would be a most powerful instrument in the hands of the authorities, but he could not admit that there was such a number of miscarriages of justice as would justify it. The police system was more efficient than it used to be, and year by year it was more difficult for a man to commit a crime and escape. Therefore, if there was an occasional miscarriage of justice—if a guilty man was occasionally not convicted—that evil would become less and less as the years went on, and, at any rate, it was not one the removal of which was a sufficient ground for the passing of the Bill. It was said, on the other hand, that there were some cases in which innocent persons were convicted who would not have been convicted had they been able to give evidence. Cases of that kind were so exceedingly rare that they could not be regarded as an important consideration. But even if there were a few cases in which innocent persons might escape under the Bill, what the House had to consider was the balance of disadvantages; and he asserted that, if the Bill became law, a far larger number of innocent people would be convicted than were convicted under the present procedure. He had some intimate friends who, if they were accused of murder, however unjustly, and were allowed to go into the witness-box, would compel the jury to convict them of the crime. [*Laughter.*] They had a habit of shuffling and equivocating—[*Ministerial laughter and cheers*]—when they had to give evidence—though they were perfectly honest, and perfectly straightforward in ordinary conversation—that the jury would be forced to come to the conclusion that they were conceding facts very much to their discredit. That type of men, which was not uncommon, would be in the most serious peril if the Bill became law and they happened to be charged with any crime; and he ventured to think that it was not wise to make a change in the law which might lead to the conviction of men of crimes of which they were not guilty, simply because they were bad witnesses, and all for the reason that there was a certain proportion of cases where convictions could be obtained, and justly obtained, if the Bill became law. It was sometimes said that the present system grew up by accident. That was not historically correct. As a matter of fact, under the old English criminal procedure a prisoner could be examined under torture. In addition to that the prisoner could be examined in Court by the Judge. The cross-examination of prisoners by Chief Justice Jeffries during the Bloody Assize was such a scandal that it led to the establishment of the present system, under which the prisoner cannot be examined at all. He might be told that such a scandal was now impossible. He admitted that it was unlikely that the Judges of the High Court would go too far in the examination of witnesses. But the Bill applied not merely to the High Court and the Courts of Quarter Sessions, but to the Petty Sessions Courts; and he hardly thought that any Member had such confidence in the discretion, ability, and experience of the Justices of the Peace throughout England, that prisoners who went into the witness-box and were cross-examined by the Attorneys who practised in criminal matters in those Courts would not be unfairly treated. He might be told that in serious cases there would be an appeal from the conviction of the Court of Summary Jurisdiction. But that was not a real answer to his argument. He thought the Bill would inevitably lead to consequences that were not contemplated by its promoters. It had been said that in the Colonies and in America some similar change had been made in criminal procedure; but he did not think the change had been quite so universal as had been represented. He challenged the Government to produce any law passed by an English-speaking country which allowed the examination and cross-examination of prisoners without restriction in anything like the same degree as was proposed by the Bill. In effect the House was being asked to adopt the Continental system. This Bill was sometimes discussed as though the prosecutions were always conducted under some sort of Treasury supervision. In Ireland that was so; but in England, in the majority of cases, the prosecutor was a private person with a personal grudge or spite against the prisoner, and a great desire to secure a conviction. In such circumstances, the counsel for the prosecutor, if he were to satisfy his client, would be obliged to press against the prisoner every question which he was legally entitled to ask. The Bill would require considerable amendment, if gross abuses in that direction were to be prevented. As to the provisions which made a husband and wife compellable witnesses in criminal cases, he did not think that it was likely to become law. The safeguard in Sub-section 3—that no husband or wife should be compellable to disclose any communication from the spouse made during the married life—was quite illusory. In practice, though the Judge would warn husband or wife giving evidence that they need not answer this or that question, the jury would draw an inference from refusal to answer; and the demeanour of the witness would practically disclose what it was desired not to reveal. Even where a man was guilty, it was an inhuman proceeding to make his guilt clear through the evidence of his wife. The ordinary procedure for the conviction of criminals was year by year becoming more efficient. If this Bill, which would revolutionise the whole procedure of the criminal court, and would violate the tenderest passions and sentiments of the human breast, were passed into law, it would produce in the long run, not a sympathy with crime, but a sympathy with the sufferings which the criminal had to endure, and that would have the opposite effect to that which was desired by those in charge of the Bill. He hoped that this year, as in previous years, the further progress of the Bill would be defeated.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth) said that he did not rise to speak from any anxiety as to the future of the Bill. The support which these proposals had received during the last 20 years at least had been of growing strength, and in favour of the present Bill there was a practically unanimous judgment among all those who, whether in this country or in any other, had had the opportunity of seeing the practical working of the two systems under discussion. There was no country, outside this, in the civilised world where the practice had been adopted of allowing a person accused of crime the elementary justice of giving his own statement as to the facts, and where it had not been acknowledged that that system had led to the ascertainment of the truth. ["Hear, hear!"] In this country, where we had been trying for the last 25 years to mitigate and remove the last remaining barbarism of our criminal code, there was not to be found a Judge who did not acknowledge that by the change which had been made in 25 Acts of Parliament, with regard to certain classes of crime, the best means of securing truth had been adopted. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. LYTTELTON (Warwick and Leamington): There are three Judges to my own knowlege who disapprove of these proposals.

Sir E. CLARKE said that he could not think who those Judges were; and, as far as he knew, the statement which he had made was absolutely true. The latest utterance was that of Lord Justice Lopes, and that was one of the strongest expressions of opinion which had ever been made in favour of the proposals in the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] But he desired to speak on the Measure, because he trusted it was the last time on which it would be necessary to discuss in the House—[*cheers, and cries of* "No!"]—the principle of a change with regard to which he had felt very strongly for many years past. There were three hon. Members on the other side of the House who had spoken in opposition to the Bill. He was quite sure there was not one of them who would allow that his experience in criminal cases had been somewhat limited. He was quite sure they would allow that his own experience in criminal cases had been long and large, and had not been the experience of a prosecuting counsel, but of one who had had to represent the interests of the prisoner. Before he came into this House at all, when he first issued an address to a constituency asking them to return him to Parliament, he mentioned in that address this reform as one that he longed to be able to assist in passing. From that time, 17½ years ago, he had never ceased to help either Government in trying to push this matter forward; and he did not think he had ever envied the Attorney General until to-night, but he did envy him the opportunity of associating his name with one of the greatest reforms which could be effected in our Administration. [*Cheers.*] The three hon. Members opposite, who were comparative amateurs in this matter, had suggested all sorts of difficulties. There was an overwhelming answer to any such opposition, and it was this—that it could be proved that upon the administration of the law as it now stood the grievance did recur—he did not say frequently, but in many cases—of an innocent man being convicted because of the present strange and barbarous rule. He had again and again had to defend prisoners who he believed to be, and felt satisfied were, innocent, who remonstrated against the injustice of their not being allowed to make their own statements as to their own case. [*Cheers.*] A case was suggested to him by something said as to this most extraordinary fact, which revolts one, that if a man on his trial has been living with a woman without being married to her, her evidence may save him, but if he has gone through the ceremony of marriage, and made the union a holy one, her evidence could not save him—she could not be called. In his own experience he secured the acquittal of a man—he could give the name—from a charge made against him at Sessions by proving that his wife was not his wife, but only living with him for a number of years without the sanction of marriage. That man would have been convicted to a certainty if he had been married to the woman. There was a case upon the records of the Courts which he had nothing to do with, but which, standing alone, should be sufficient to satisfy any Member of the House as to the absolute necessity of this alteration of the law. A clergyman was charged with committing a criminal offence in respect of some children. The only evidence that could be called besides himself really was his wife, and she could not be called; he was convicted, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment for each offence, the terms to be consecutive —that was to say, four years' imprisonment. He went to prison in November. The man, from prison, put before the Home Secretary reasons for his release. The Home Secretary declined to make any recommendation until the girls had been indicted for perjury. In the following April or May the girls were indicted for perjury. The jury found them guilty of perjury. Why? Because at that trial the man and his wife were the witnesses, and the girls who had given evidence at the previous trial could not be examined. The girls were convicted of perjury; the man was released from prison. He brought an action against his solicitor for want of care or judgment in defending him, but the question of his guilt or innocence was never tried in a case in which all persons could be heard. [*Cheers.*] So it came about that the man was convicted of a shameful offence because his mouth and that of his wife were closed; the children were convicted because they could not be heard when a charge of perjury was brought against them; and if it was possible, under any system of law, for so scandalous a thing as that to have taken place, surely it was time that some remedy should be applied. A case in which he appeared as counsel so forced upon him the conviction that there was something wrong in the law, that he felt it was his duty never to rest, but to take every opportunity of securing its amendment. A man kept a small public-house in the outskirts of London. He was assisted by his wife and one servant. He sold it for £1,500; three bills were given at 6, 17 and 18 months for the value of the house. The first two Bills were duly paid; when the third bill became due the man who had given it was not able to meet it, and an action was brought against him upon the bill. He thereupon took out a summons at a police court against the man who had sold him the house for false representation; and the man was committed for trial for obtaining money by false pretences as to the value of the public-house. The case came on for trial at Clerkenwell Sessions, when it appeared that the only persons who could possibly have given evidence were the man himself and his wife. The servant had left the employment 12 months before, and could not be found. In these circumstances Serjeant Ballantyne, who defended, had no evidence to offer. The man was convicted and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. Fortunately an action was pending on the third of the bills. He, as counsel, succeeded in getting the case advanced and tried early, but not so early but that this man had had four or five months of imprisonment, and he came up from prison to give evidence with his hair cropped and wearing the prison clothes. Then he and his wife were able to give evidence, and there was not a question about it. He got his verdict upon the Bill, and judgment was given in his favour. [*Cheers.*] Of course the Home Secretary released him, but the result was that for five or six months he went through all the horrors of a criminal conviction and its consequences which would never have taken place if there had been a reasonable law in this country that the man who was accused of a crime might be allowed to give evidence on his own behalf. [*Cheers.*] He could tell of another case which touched him almost as strongly, where a man was charged with setting his employer's place on fire. This man, for whom he had been counsel, had one Saturday afternoon left his employer's place, and a fire had then broken out, and it was discovered that petroleum had been poured over the books of the firm. This man, who had been employed there for 28 years, was the only man who had a key of those premises, and the police could find no way in which anybody else could have entered. It would have gone very hard with the man but for the fact that he had been in his own home, with his wife and a couple of children, the same evening. If the case had gone to a jury, however, there would have been no possibility of proving an *alibi*, and this man, of whose innocence he was absolutely certain, might have run great risk of being convicted. He had brought the facts to the knowledge of Mr. Poland, who was prosecuting, and Mr. Justice Hawkins, who was going to try the case, with the result that the case was not proceeded with because the Judge said it was not a case in which it would be safe to convict. But these were the dangers to which men were exposed every day in this country. [*Cheers.*] It was an experience of 30 years' work in practice in our Courts which induced him to speak with all the earnestness which he could possibly command in support of a Bill which he believed to be essential in order to render the administration of our criminal law right and fair. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course there were minor questions with regard to the cross-examination which should be allowed, with regard to the calling of the wife and husband, and so on; but those were matters which might be raised and dealt with in Committee. But for himself he would say he was grateful to the Government for having brought this Bill in in the simplest possible form, and he thought it would be greatly to the advantage of justice that the Bill should be passed in the form in which it was brought in. As to the question of cross-examination, the hon. and learned Member opposite had said that he knew perfectly honest people who had such a habit of shuffling and equivocation that if they were falsely accused they would get into trouble from their persistence in that uncomfortable habit. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. KNOX: I said in the witness-box.

Sir E. CLARKE: I do not know whether the hon. and learned Member often sees his friends in the witness-box. [*Laughter.*] A habit of shuffling and equivocation in the witness-box certainly did not suggest any great confidence in the innocence of the people who were addicted to that habit. There was an idea that when innocent persons accused of crime came to give their evidence they might be so harassed by irrelevant and cruel cross-examination that they would suffer from it, and would be likely to be convicted. He believed that to be an entire delusion. He had had some experience in defending persons in criminal cases, and if he were defending a man who was guilty—[*laughter*]—if by any chance he should unfortunately happen to be in that position—he would desire nothing better than that the man should be apparently cross-examined unfairly in regard to other matters. ["Hear, hear!"] Nothing would be more certain to procure his acquittal. [*Laughter.*] There was no one having experience from day to day in the conduct of trials, civil or criminal, who did not know that it was an immense advantage if the counsel on the other side went a bit too far and allowed the jury to get the idea that the man was being unfairly treated. If that idea existed the man was perfectly safe. In regard to the testimony of husband and wife, surely it was obvious that the wife ought to be allowed to give evidence in favour of her husband. He could not imagine that anybody could suggest that there was any sense or reason in the rule which at present existed to prevent a wife or huband from giving evidence in favour of the husband or wife. Why should not the wife or husband be called upon to give evidence against the person accused in criminal cases? He supposed the desire was to secure a true result. They did not hesitate to call, in criminal cases, the child against the father or mother; it was done every week. They could call upon the husband or wife to give evidence in the case of an offence committed by the wife against the husband, or the husband against the wife. They could not say that the wife might be a witness for the husband, but not against him, without introducing an inequality which obviously would be very difficult to deal with. The object of all administration of criminal justice was to secure the ascertainment of the true facts. At present we had a practice which had seemed to him again and again, when he had been engaged in great criminal cases, to be an absolute and complete mockery; there had been sitting in the dock somebody who by the very hypothesis of the case was the person who might know most about the circumstances, inasmuch as the charge was brought against that person because he or she had been most immediately connected with the circumstances which were being investigated. Then our curious rule had been that the police looked about and had the person who appeared to be most immediately concerned in this matter arrested; and from that moment his or her mouth was shut. It had been said that the prisoner had an opportunity of making a statement. Really, that was a mockery. [*Cheers.*] The prisoner was charged at the police court, and there a statement was read out to him that anything he said would be taken down and used against him. In 99 cases out of a hundred, as a matter of course, nothing was said there, because it was not the real trial of the case, and if anything was said there he had the strongest feeling about using the statement as the conclusive statement of the defendant. It was most unfair to use it, because the evidence against that prisoner might be supplemented; and then, that which had been an honest statement from the point of view of the prisoner, viewing the case at the time, might appear to the jury to be an incomplete and imperfect statement when they came to deal with the whole case. It was said that the prisoner was allowed to make a statement, but the fact that that statement could not be tested by cross-examination deprived it of all weight with the jury. There had been experience during past years of statements made by prisoners with regard to matters upon which they had been charged. He doubted very much whether there was a case in which a statement made by a prisoner had procured an acquittal, but he felt certain that there were many cases—and he could name half-a-dozen at least—where, if the prisoner had been allowed to make a statement and to say, "I am prepared to answer any questions put to me," there would have been the acquittal of an innocent person. He did not speak on this matter as a theorist or as a doctrinaire. ["Hear, hear!"] Nor did he speak of it from the slightest regard to the question whether the Bill was brought forward by one Ministry or the other; but he knew that those who had large experience in this matter were all absolutely agreed. [*Cries of* "Carson!"] He did not wish to say anything in the nature of disrespect of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin. But his right hon. Friend's experience had not been large in this country with regard to the defence of prisoners; and he was afraid that his opposition to this Bill was based on two grounds—first, that it was a bad Bill; and next, that it was not extended to the country to which he belonged. ["No!" *and laughter.*] But looking at the Bill as applicable to Great Britain, he believed they were practically unanimous with regard to it. Since Mr. Russell Gurney, 22 years ago, introduced a similar Bill, there had been a steady accumulation of judicial authority, and of the authority of those who practised in the Law Courts in its behalf. He had never looked on it as a question of legal opinion. Since the time when, more than 30 years ago, he had intrusted to him the responsibility of defending persons who might be innocent of the offences with which they were charged, there had been borne in upon him year after year the absolute, gross, and wicked injustice of forbidding the person against whom the charge was made from going into the witness-box, to face his fellow-countrymen who had to try him, and to tell in his own words the story and the circumstances out of which the accusation had grown. [*Cheers.*] He hoped, therefore, the Bill would pass. He was glad that it was a simple Bill, and he did not think that any qualifications were required. He trusted that the Attorney General would have the satisfaction—a distinction for which he envied him—of associating his name with the passing of a Bill which he believed would be the most valuable, most important, as it was the most imperative, administration of our criminal law. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. J. L. WALTON (Leeds, S.) said that as one who had practical experience in the administration of the criminal law he concurred to a large extent with the observations of the last speaker. He doubted whether they could find in any quarter of the House a large body of opinion to dissent from the general abstract proposition which lay at the root of this proposal. Who could deny on lines of abstract justice that it was desirable the accused, who knew most about the occurrences which led to his accusation, should have the opportunity to tell his own story, in regard to which he was the most competent, although not the most reliable, witness? As a proposition it was unassailable; but the difficulties arose in giving practical application to it. ["Hear, hear!"] The interesting and pathetic illustrations from the large repertoire of professional experience with which his hon. and learned Friend entertained the House were subject to this great disadvantage. He gave the House an account of the serious difficulties in which his own clients were placed when he found that he, as their counsel, was not in a position to place them in the witness-box. The difficulty in giving effect to the principle of the Bill did not arise when a prisoner was defended by able and accomplished counsel. It arose when they had to deal with an illiterate man who could not frame a statement in intelligible phrases, give a coherent narrative of the incidents in connection with which he was charged, and to whose untutored skill was left the task of rehabilitating himself after skilful and damaging cross-examination. The principle might be clothed with provisions which might obviate all his objections. Why were there not clauses providing for the representation of prisoners by counsel, insuring that they should be adequately examined, and providing that after the cross-examination (which might be addressed to immaterial topics and directed to prejudice their general credit) it should be the duty of some persons charged with the administration of justice to see that adequate explanation was given in regard to these matters, and, if necessary, that the prejudice which had been elicited should not be allowed to affect the issues upon which the prisoner's liberty depended? He knew of no Continental country where there was not provision for insuring the due examination, both of prisoners and witnesses. According to the law of Scotland no prisoner, however strong the case against him might be, or however trivial the charge, was left without the provision, at the public expense, of adequate representation by counsel, in order that no injustice might be done to him. If this Bill contained such provisions as these, he would be a supporter instead of an opponent of the Bill. As to making a prisoner's evidence compulsory, would anyone who had had experience in the Courts question the practical operation of a permissive Measure of that kind? In the Divorce Court, where the issues were often as serious, painful, and disastrous as in the criminal Courts, the parties were available as witnesses in their own defence. But the common formulary in the Divorce Court, in which counsel announced the fact that the petition was uncontested, was an intimation to the presiding Judge that they were not in a position to put their clients into the box. This formulary, which was part of the ordinary procedure in the Divorce Court, would soon become the ordinary formulary of criminal Courts when the principle had once been recognised in the form suggested in the Bill and had been brought into practical operation. In both previous Bills there were safeguards which had been omitted from this. Why was a prisoner allowed to be asked whether or not he had been previously convicted? Was it proposed to let a common jury, composed of men unskilled in weighing evidence and excluding irrelevant matter, try a man, knowing he was a hardened criminal and had committed many other crimes? The moment it had been elicited that he had been convicted several times before, the issue would be a foregone conclusion. ["Hear, hear!"] The safeguard which protected prisoners from this question appeared in the Bill last introduced. Why was it excluded from the present proposal? There was another new feature. In our civilisation the loyalty of a wife to her husband was a supreme duty imposed upon her by social canons. That duty was to be sacrificed in the interest of public duty under this Bill when she was summoned to support a charge against her husband. She might make a statement of fact which might insure his conviction. The whole question might turn on whether at a particular hour her husband was at home or not. She must either perjure herself by her answer, if the question were put to her, or involve ruin upon herself and her family. This terrible position for a wife did not arise to a married woman under the last Bill. Its appearance now was a blot, and while it remained part of the present Measure he should conceive it to be his duty to vote against it. This Bill could not rightly be called a simple Measure, for it purported to effect a most important change in the criminal law, and a change so grave ought not to be made without safeguards and limitations.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) said that as the Bill applied to Scotland he did not wish to remain silent. The principle of the Measure had been under the consideration of several of his predecessors, who had given their hearty assent to it, as he did himself. The practice in Scotland might, he thought, allay some of the apprehensions of hon. Member's opposite. Several of them were afraid of the prejudice which they believed would be caused against a prisoner who should refuse to go into the box and offer his testimony. In Scotland there was what was called the "system of declaration." A prisoner was brought before a magistrate and committed for trial on the *primâ facie* case put forward by the Public Prosecutor. He might make a declaration, but it was not incumbent upon him to do so. Although, of course, it would be easy at the trial to ask why a person had made no declaration on the subject of the crime charged against him, he could assure the House that the fact that no such declaration had been made was not used against prisoners, for the Judges had been strong enough to prevent their being prejudiced in that way. He did not see why English Judges should not be strong enough to do the same thing here. If among English prosecuting counsel there might be young and keen spirits who could not be restrained, in Scotland prosecuting counsel were under his fatherly eye, and he should be only too ready to restrain them. [*Laughter.*] The hon. and learned Member who had just sat down had referred to what was said in the Divorce Court when a party was not presented for examination. The answer to the hon. Gentleman's argument was that, after all, divorce was necessarily a civil proceeding, and that the issue in a civil proceeding was a different issue from the issue in a criminal proceeding. It was because there was a difference between the issues that it was fair to draw a certain inference in a divorce case from the fact that a party did not go into the witness-box, while it would be unfair to draw the same inference in a criminal case. There were cases already where a wife was a good witness against a husband—cases of assault by the husband on the wife, for example. As Public Prosecutor, he had been engaged in two cases of child murder within the last 12 months, and in both those cases, although he knew exactly how the crimes were committed, he could not convict the prisoners because the present laws of evidence rendered it impossible. In each case the mother had described the way in which the murder of the infant had been committed by the husband, but conviction was impossible because the wife's evidence was not available. Surely it would be well to render it possible to punish crimes of that character, and to disregard the somewhat sentimental considerations which had been expressed at to the turpitude of putting a wife into the box against her husband, or a husband against his wife. So far as Scotch experience went, they believed that the Bill would do good, and accordingly they gave it their hearty support.

SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD desired to express his warm approval of the Bill, more especially as every other speech from his side of the House had been against it. [*Opposition cheers.*] This was one of the most important Measures that had been introduced this Session, and he was glad for the honour and credit of the House that it had been debated absolutely apart from any party feeling or party prejudice. [*Cheers.*] From both sides a certain number of hard cases had been put. Hon. Members on both sides had vied with each other in depicting heartrending scenes where trembling women and trembling prisoners had been placed at a disadvantage according to the views which hon. Members held. It was just as easy to draw a picture—he did not mean in the literal sense—[*laughter*]—of a poor fellow-creature who was convicted because his mouth was shut as to depict a case of hardship on the other side. He was sure there was no hon. and learned Member who had been in the habit of defending prisoners who did not remember how often he had appealed to juries as to the hardship "to this poor man who stands at the Bar with his mouth closed"—[*laughter*]—and all the time thanking his stars that he could not put him in the box. [*Renewed laughter.*] He did not propose to endeavour to illustrate the strength of the case which he advocated by calling up any pathetic picture to its aid. The illustration of the Divorce Court was not altogether a happy one. It was said that the common practice in that Court was for counsel, when he found he was not able to go on, to say in withdrawing that he was not in a position to put his client in the box. But why? Because counsel knew perfectly well that his client was guilty. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, no advocate would put his client into the box if he knew that he was guilty, and if he thought he would make a bad witness. [*Laughter.*] It, therefore, did not appear to him that this illustration assisted the argument against the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] He joined in the sympathy expressed with the hon. Member for Londonderry City. It would seem that some of his Friends could not go into the witness-box without making it apparent to the meanest capacity that they were telling what was absolutely untrue. [*Laughter.*] They were admirable persons in their way, but they had this unfortunate gift, if he might so call it—[*laughter*]—of impressing everybody who heard them with the firmest belief that they were unconscionable liars. [*Laughter.*] He sympathised with them and with his hon. and learned Friend. [*Laughter.*] The extreme case he put, even with regard to persons with whom every right-minded man must have a deep feeling of sympathy, did not appear to be an argument against the Bill. He wanted to say a few words with regard to the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the Dublin University—a speech well worthy the attention of the House, and which was strongly directed against the Bill. His right hon. and learned Friend dealt first of all with the Irish case. Why he dealt with it at such length he did not quite understand, because the Irish case was removed entirely from the Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: That is only a dodge.

Sir F. LOCKWOOD observed that the hon. and learned Member for Louth said it was a dodge, and he supposed he must take him to be a good judge. [*Laughter.*] He himself did not see the object of the dodge. He should like in this connection to make one protest against a statement made by the hon. and learned Member for Londonderry City, who said that Irish prisoners in English Courts of justice had not fair play.

Mr. KNOX: I said there was a prejudice against them which did not exist in the same degree against other prisoners.

Sir F. LOCKWOOD said, if there was any prejudice against them, they had not fair play. ["Hear, hear!"] He had had some experience in Sheffield, where he was Recorder for ten years. There was a large Irish population there, and be it said to the credit of that population—and he believed it could be said of the Irish population generally throughout their large cities—that they very seldom appeared in criminal Courts charged with felonies. ["Hear, hear!"] They had a rumpus now and then, resulting in charges of unlawful wounding, or trifling offences of that kind. [*Laughter.*] His experience on the few occasions when they did appear in Courts of Justice was that there were no gentlemen better able to take excellent care of themselves. They were most admirable speakers; they were adept cross-examiners, and so far from any peculiarity of speech provoking contempt, it was most provocative of a certain amount of good-humoured laughter. He was sure that Irishmen were not treated in English Courts of Justice with the slightest degree of unfairness, and that the hon. and learned Member would himself acknowledge this if he would make further inquiry. [*Cheers.*] Turning to the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the Dublin University, he had said there was no demand for this Bill. Who would make a demand for it? They did not expect that unconvicted prisoners would go in bands on a Sunday afternoon to Hyde Park and demand that they should have the right to appear as witnesses. [*Laughter.*] He did not quite see the quarter from which any demand could come that would satisfy the right hon. Gentleman. But there was a strong feeling in favour of this Measure. The great majority of the Judges, he believed, were strongly in favour of it. ["Hear, hear!"] He had some diffidence in saying it, having regard to the views he held with reference to the Bill, but surely, a large proportion of practitioners in the legal profession were in favour of the Bill. ["Hear!"]

Surely the long course of Measures which had been introduced since 1879 showed a strong trend of popular feeling in regard to this matter, and beyond that he did not know whence his hon. and learned Friend could expect a demand to come. His hon. and learned Friend drew a pathetic picture of an unfortunate, poor, untutored, uneducated man—innocent it was to be presumed—going into the witness-box to be badgered by vindictive counsel, to be sneered at by the Judge, and apparently ignored by the jury. What a condition of things! A prisoner poor and innocent, a vindictive prosecuting counsel, a jury callous, and a Judge impotent—

Mr. CARSON: I never said that any Judge was impotent. [*Laughter.*]

Sir F. LOCKWOOD said he was only describing the picture drawn by his hon. and learned Friend, and it involved a condition of things in which the Judge presiding was impotent to see justice done in the Court over which he was presiding. Of course, his hon. and learned Friend had to assume all that, and drew his pathetic picture from his own imagination. He could also draw a picture. A poor, uneducated, and innocent prisoner, a vindictive prosecuting counsel, a callous jury, and a Judge not alive to his duty, and the unfortunate prisoner was called upon to cross-examine various witnesses put into the box. What chance had he of doing that, what chance had he of coping with the vindictive counsel conducting the prosecution, who would re-examine and take advantage of all the inexperienced slips? That was an unfortunate position, no doubt, and he was as much justified in conjuring up such a picture as was his hon. and learned Friend in conjuring up the picture he drew. Hard cases there might be on either side, and pathetic pictures might be drawn. He firmly believed that passing this Bill would be a great act of justice, because it would remove what to his mind was a slur on the administration of justice. He should give his hearty support to the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. DARLING said, with regard to some expressions that fell from the hon. and learned Member for Derry as to an Irishman being at a disadvantage in an English Court, that the remedy would be not to reject this Bill, but to enact that an Irishman should not be a competent witness in an English Court of Justice on his own or anybody else's behalf. With regard to the proposal itself, he had never made it a feature in his election address, not supposing the matter had any personal interest for his constituents—[*laughter*]—but he had formed a very definite view that a man charged with an act of violence in a criminal Court should be in the same position as to giving evidence as he would be in were he charged for the act in a civil Court, and it was not easy to see how any logical distinction could be drawn. It was a question between two different systems of arriving at the truth. The old system of English law was this. They said that any person who was accused either of owing money or of having committed an assault, whether he was accused in a criminal court or in a civil court, was presumably a person who would not tell the truth, and, therefore, was incapacitated as a witness, and they did not allow the defendant to give evidence, whatever was the nature of the charge brought against him. Long ago that view was given up, and it was now considered a barbarous view. They had ascertained that people might have a high interest in not disclosing the truth and yet they disclosed it, and they had acted upon that tentatively so far. By Measure after Measure they had first excepted one cause of action after another from the operation of that general rule. Then they proceeded further, and by Measure after Measure they had excepted one criminal charge after another from the operation of that rule, and now they stood in this position—that in a large number of cases the prisoner might, and did, go into the witness-box in a criminal court and gave evidence on his own behalf. They have even reached this pass, that it was possible in the same indictment to include a charge upon which a prisoner might give evidence, and another upon which he might not give evidence. One did not need to have been a Commissioner of Assize to see the absurdity of such a proceeding. The argument he would put before the House was simply this—they had gone so far that they must either repeal absolutely all the statutes which permitted a prisoner to give evidence on his own behalf or they must enfranchise him altogether. He would suggest that the hon. and learned Members who were opposed to this Bill should consult what some of them had written on the dial in the Temple—*Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said he felt confident that if the Debate had been followed by a larger number of hon. Members the result would have been to lead them to vote for the rejection of the Measure. [*Cries of* "No!"] He was ashamed to confess that he had not studied the question with any great care, and he came to the Debate in a frame of mind to be converted by the arguments he might hear. The Attorney General throughout his distinguished legal career had moved in the serene atmosphere of the civil courts, and he did not think that either he or the Solicitor General, with all their wide experience, would venture to speak with anything like authority from the point of view of the criminal lawyer. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth stood in a different position. In addition to being a distinguished advocate in all courts, he had enjoyed an unique and exceptional career in the criminal courts, and he expected from him not merely general particulars of certain cases, but the enunciation of some great principle which was involved in this proposal. Instead of that he gratified them with very interesting and, in some instances, very graphic narratives of certain cases in which he had appeared and of others of which he had been informed, in which hardships had been inflicted on the prisoners. He admitted it was possible to multiply instances in which innocent persons might have been acquitted had an opportunity been afforded them of giving evidence on their own behalf, but it was not owing to illustrations of that character that they were going to revolutionise a criminal system which had obtained unchallenged through a long series of generations. In one case, and in one case only, it would possibly be an advantage to a prisoner to allow him to go into the box, and that was where the prisoner's previous career was unimpeachable, but he had no hesitation in saying that to impose upon a prisoner the absolute responsibility of going into the witness-box would inflict hardship which, in the end, would militate largely against the interests of justice. Let them take the case of a man who had been convicted of similar offences to the one with which he was now charged. The counsel for the prosecution would put to him questions relating to his previous career, and human nature being what it is, there would be very little chance of the jury acquitting him. It had been suggested by the Attorney General that a great number of Judges were in favour of this Measure, but at the same time there was no inconsiderable number of Judges who were opposed to it. He put a similar question to a great Judge the other day. He asked him if it was permissible to interrogate prisoners, and his answer was that if you once admitted prisoners into the witness-box, called by solicitor or counsel, the necessary consequence was that they would introduce into England that system which he considered one of the great defects of the administration of justice in France. It would follow, as a matter of course, that there would be interrogation of the prisoner by the Judge. [*Cries of* "No!"] It would be the natural result, and then they would have the spectacle which so shocked their feelings, of prisoners being tortured as they were tortured in the petty Courts of France. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] He did not wish to discuss the matter. Exhaustive speeches had already been delivered. He approached the question with an unbiassed mind. It would be undesirable that they should expose a prisoner to the necessity of being interrogated. In conclusion might he call the attention of the House to one very great danger. If a person did go into the box and did give answers which were untrue, resulting in his acquittal, he would be exposed to a prosecution for perjury. That was not a mere phantom of the imagination. He knew of a case where a prisoner was acquitted in that way. The prisoner was acquitted, and as a result of that acquittal the police—it was a police prosecution—at once prosecuted the man for perjury. ["Hear, hear!"] That case was brought before Mr. Justice Wills, who expressed his horror that the prisoner should again stand his trial. If this Bill passed, he hoped it would be passed in a form to avoid such scandals as this. In conclusion he called attention to the fact that a prisoner who was acquitted on false evidence given by himself might be further prosecuted for perjury.

Mr. J. LLOYD WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon) said he took a great interest in regard in the details of this Bill, and was somewhat qualified to say a word or two with regard to it. He wished the House to take into consideration what were the present position and prospects of criminal jurisdiction. A man was put on his trial, evidence was given against him, and he was desirous of making a statement. In accordance with what he thought was the unfortunate system pursued in their Courts, the man was told he must not make a statement now; he might ask questions. That was a course which he never followed, because he thought it was hard on the prisoner. A prisoner ought to be allowed to say what he had got to say in his defence as early as possible in the trial, because at the conclusion of a case an illiterate prisoner might have entirely forgotten what he had intended to advance in his defence. He was in favour of the Bill, and was prepared to vote for it. But he should like to see inserted in the Bill, before it became law, a safeguard against a prisoner being asked on cross-examination any question in regard to previous convictions. ["Hear!"] He was trying only two days ago a woman who had been 105 times convicted—41 of the convictions having been for felony—and if, as might be done under the Bill, he had asked that woman, "Is it not true that you have been convicted 105 times?" the jury without turning in the box would have found her guilty. The law hitherto had been most jealous, and rightly jealous, with regard to what he would call the concealment of previous convictions from the jury until the prisoner had been convicted, and he hoped that when the Bill got into Committee, a rigid provision would be inserted that questions in regard to previous convictions should not be asked. With that safeguard he thought the examination of prisoners would tend to the furtherance of justice.

Mr. DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont) claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question. Debate resumed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said the Bill had been described as a Bill of great importance, which jurists had sought for and sighed for for the last thirty years, and it had been said that vain efforts had been made by various Governments, irrespective of party, to place it on the Statute Book. But the Government had placed the Bill on the Orders of the Day after the Berriew School Bill, showing that in their opinion the Berriew School Bill, which interested 37 people and a boy—[*laughter*]—was of more importance to the country than this great Measure affecting the criminal law. Again, there was another Measure which had been taken up by all sections of judges and jurists, namely, the establishment of Court of Criminal Appeal. No attempt had been made by the Government of a Court of Criminal Appeal. No Measure of real beneficence—but they preferred instead to endeavour to pass this Bill about which, to say the least, opinion was divided. Admittedly the Bill was intended to secure more convictions. It was said that the Irish Members should have no interest in it, because Ireland was excluded from its operation. But his experience was that after a pledge had been given in the House that a Bill should not apply to Ireland, an Amendment extending it to Ireland was inserted in the House of Lords. He was surprised to hear the learned Attorney General giving as one of his instances in favour of the Bill the question of forgery; and his mind went back to the case of the accused person who was allowed to give evidence in his own behalf, and not before a common jury, but before "the first assembly of gentlemen in Europe." A more lame and halting statement than that accused and innocent person made on that occasion he never heard; and the House did not believe it. In speaking on the Second Reading of the Coercion Act of 1887, in regard to a letter which was admittedly forged, Mr. Parnell took the miserable point that the end of a letter was turned down, whereas in his usual signature it was turned up, and the House received the statement with guffaws. That was the statement of the ablest, the astutest, and the coolest man in this country or perhaps any other.

He was put before the House on trial, and when the House had heard his defence they believed him guilty. The Coercion Act was passed on that basis; and the learned Attorney General, who was so anxious for the prisoner, passed through his great Bill about charges and allegations, and brought forward Richard Pigott in support of forgery. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] And was Mr. Parnell acquitted on his own sworn testimony? No, he was acquitted because the case against him broke down upon the miserable testimony of the accusers put forward with all the strength which the British Government could command. It was said that there was every chance in this country for the innocent, and that there was no prejudice against an Irishman. What about the brothers Habron, who were sentenced to death for the murder of policeman Cox, near Manchester, and kept in penal servitude, for no reason but that they were Irishmen—[*cries of* "No!" *and Nationalist cheers*]—until Peace, on his own conviction for murder, admitted that he had killed the policeman. They knew what fair play Irishmen received in the House, and how utterly impartial and unprejudiced were the minds of the educated classes in regard to Irish claims. One of the greatest grudges which Irishmen had against Englishmen was that whatever the actions of the latter might have been with regard to Ireland, they were always graciously pleased to forgive themselves. [*Laughter.*] This Bill had passed the House of Lords a great number of times, and except for one occasion, when a Liberal Government was in office, the Lords had always inserted Ireland in the Bill. It was said that crimes should be punished. He saw the hon. Member for Battersea in his place, who was recently a criminal before a British jury. Workmen were continually being brought forward charged with conspiracy under the Trade Union Acts. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] The law of criminal conspiracy was the widest and vaguest on which anyone could be tried—

The FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY claimed to move "That the Question be now put." [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition cries of* "Oh!"]

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 185; Noes, 67.—(Division List, No. 167.)

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 210; Noes, 41.—(Division List, No. 168.)

Main Question put, and agreed to:—Bill Read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUNDS BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

RAILWAY ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES].

Committee deferred till Monday next.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND [CONTRIBUTION].

Committee thereupon deferred till Monday next.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION [CHARGE].

Committee thereupon deferred till Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION [INCREASED GRANT].

Resolution reported.

> "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an addition to the Grant payable to School Boards, under Section ninety-seven of the Elementary Education Act 1870, by increasing the sum of seven shillings and sixpence therein mentioned by fourpence for every complete penny by which the rate therein mentioned exceeds threepence; Provided that the said sum as so increased shall not exceed sixteen shillings and sixpence.'

MR. T. M. HEALY: On what day will the Order for the Committee stage be set down?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: On Monday.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it intended to proceed with that stage on Monday?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

MR. ACLAND said it would be convenient if at this stage they knew what were the intentions of the Government with reference to the Second Reading of the Bill. The Bill was not yet printed; and they could not for a few days expect to see the details promised by the Vice President. In these circumstances he hoped the Leader of the House might be able to say that it would not be necessary to take the Second Reading immediately.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman has made an appeal to me with regard to the future stages of this Bill. This question can hardly be discussed in abstraction and without consideration of the general course of business during the next few days, and immediately after the Easter holidays. If I may, without trespassing on the Rules of Order, go into these matters, I would say that my intention would be to Read this Bill a Second time upon Monday next, or, if it so happened that the time available on Monday was not sufficient for the Second Reading, to conclude that stage upon Tuesday. But some right hon. Gentlemen opposite and others interested in the Bill have made a strong appeal to me not to bring on the Second Reading so soon after the period at which the Bill could be printed, and in the hands of Members. ["Hear, hear!"] I should be desirous, of course, in this as in other respects to meet the views of Gentlemen on either side of the House, and I hope that if I attempt to do so they will on their part meet the Government with regard to the general arrangement of business. I should be prepared to defer the Second Reading till the Monday on which we meet after the holidays, instead of on the Monday preceding the holidays, and further to rise on Monday next instead of on Tuesday next, provided the House, after dealing with the Motion which will stand first on Monday with regard to the adjournment for the Easter holidays, would consent to the introduction of the Irish Agriculture and Industries Bill, and to the further stages of certain Bills which I believe, so far as my information goes, to be quite uncontroversial. These Bills are the Regular and Elders' Widows' Funds Bill, the Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, the Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill, and the East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill; together with the necessary financial Resolutions relating to certain Bills. I believe these are unopposed Bills, and if it were necessary in order to carry them I would gladly move the suspension of the 12 o'clock Rule on Monday, so that after having got through the Motion for the adjournment and these uncontroversial Bills the House should have no further work before the Easter holidays. I have some reason to believe that that arrangement would not be inconvenient to either side of the House, and as I bring it forward in order to approach the right hon. Gentleman in his objections to taking the Second Reading upon Monday, I trust it may receive general sanction from all quarters of the House. Of course, we on this side of the House are prepared to sit on Monday and on Tuesday to finish the business, but I think it will be to the general convenience if the plan I have devised to meet the wish of the House were accepted by the House at large. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. ACLAND had no doubt the proposition which the right hon. Gentleman had made would become a matter of negotiation through the usual channels with a view to a settlement.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY quite accepted this, but intimated that if the general plan of business which he had sketched out should not meet with approval there would be no reason to complain of him if he adhered to the original scheme which he laid before the House some days ago. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said there was one question which was necessary to be answered in order that the districts might know clearly before the vacation what the real basis was on which the Government had formed their Estimates of grants to the various districts. There was a difference of opinion as to what the School Board rate in a particular district actually was—whether the rate in the pound, mentioned in Section 97 of the Act of 1870, and referred to in the Resolution now before the House was the rate stated on the demand note of the rating authority, and actually paid by the ratepayers, or the nominal rate determined by the proportion between the amount required by the School Board paid by the rating authority and expended in the year, and the gross rateable value of the district, regardless of the amount which the ratepayer must find to cover the loss through compounding, cost of collection, empty houses, and various other considerations. So far as he could see, the section was by no means clear on this point. It was, however, a very natural one, and affected very considerably the amount of the grant which would be given to different districts. In his own district of West Ham it would make a difference of 3d. per pound. If the Estimate was on the first consideration the grant in his district would be 2s. 3d. in the pound, and if on the second consideration it would be 2s. 6d. This was a difference so material that it was desirable that the matter should be cleared up at the earliest possible date. So far as he could gather the Estimates were entirely inaccurate from end to end. They depended upon a legal interpretation of the phraseology used in Section 97 as to whether the 3d. was on the amount of the actual rateable value or the value as it existed on paper. Seeing that this would make a difference in some districts of at least 1s. per child in average attendance, and in his own district of from £1,400 to £1,500 per annum, he hoped the House would consider the matter of sufficient importance to have this ambiguity cleared away at the earliest possible moment. He hoped that before the present stage was passed the Solicitor General or some other official on behalf of the Government would state clearly the particular basis on which their computation had been made. One other question he desired to ask, regretting to delay the House, but there was keen anxiety to know what the actual grant would be, and differences of impression were widespread, and made a complete statement desirable in reference to the decrease in the grant after the first year of operation. The question did not perhaps arise on this initial stage, but it was a point that should be cleared up before the Easter vacation.

Sir J. GORST regretted very much that it was impossible at this stage to clear up all the doubts the hon. Member had expressed. The hon. Gentleman had put a question to him early in the evening to which he had given the best answer he could, and if the hon. Gentleman would study the terms of that answer he would find it threw a considerable amount of light on the position. It was impossible to clear up all doubts now, because the operation of the Bill would depend upon the construction of an Act of Parliament 27 years old, and no declaration made by a non-legal Member like himself, or, indeed, by the Attorney General or the Solicitor General, would settle the matter, which must be left to the decision of Judges in the administration of justice. The difficulties to which the hon. Member had alluded arose out of a not very clearly drawn section of the Act of 1870, and no declaration by himself or by his hon. and learned colleagues would make that 97th Section clear and complete. If it was to be cleared up, that should be done in Committee on the Bill, and if the House chose to address itself to the task of amending that section, the assistance of the Law Officers, of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for York, and others, would be available.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said the right hon. Gentleman had been very playful with the House, but Members were in an extremely difficult position because this unintelligible section, upon which four different forms of procedure had arisen, having very different financial results, was the basis of this Resolution now being reported, and was to be the basis of the Bill. The whole of the grants would proceed on the basis of Section 97, which was unintelligible. His hon. Friend opposite, who probably understood the matter as well as anyone in the House, said the difference in procedure meant a difference of a 3d. rate in West Ham. The suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman was that an Amendment might be introduced in Committee; but, having regard to the Resolution, it would not be possible to Members to propose any Amendment which, in the opinion of the Chairman, would be in the direction of increasing the grant. It was open, no doubt, to Amendment by decreasing the grant, but this would be hardly acceptable to their constituents. They expressed some surprise on the Motion which they were now reporting at the total amount of money being only £110,000 additional for Board Schools; but to-day from the Vice President they had heard that even this small sum was liable to a reduction in the second year, and to a reduction the extent of which it was very difficult to estimate. They were in this strange position—that they had passed a Resolution which was to be the basis of a Bill, and which was incomprehensible to the authorities who would have to put it before them. There certainly was the gravest doubt among authorities in the country as to what this provision actually meant, and he hoped that on the Second Reading of the Bill, at the beginning of the Debate, they would have a clear statement from the Government, and, if possible, from the Law Officers of the Crown, as to what was the meaning of the Bill.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said these proposals affected such a great variety of interests in such a variety of ways that it seemed to him positively monstrous that the Government should take the Second Reading of the Bill before a reasonable time had been allowed to the ratepayers of the country to consider the matter, and to make representations if they desired to do so.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said that on Monday night the Vice President of the Committee of Council gave several sets of figures, in order to show how greatly the cost of schools varied in different localities. Among others, the right hon. Gentleman mentioned the Sutton-in-Ashfield School Board. The authorities of that place had requested him to state that the figures given by the right hon. Gentleman were inaccurate. It was not necessary to give the correct figures, but he presumed that in the allocation of the grant great care would be taken to obtain correct information with regard to the rating in the several places affected.

Resolution agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir John Gorst, the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Solicitor General.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend Section ninety-seven of the Elementary Education Act 1870," presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 196.]

PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE [ADVANCES].

Resolution reported:—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding in the whole £500,000, as may be required for the purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of a Site for Public Offices in or near Whitehall, and for other purposes connected therewith, and to authorise the Treasury, for the purpose of providing for the issue and repayment of such sums, to borrow money by means of terminable annuities for a period not exceeding fifty years, such annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund."

Resolution agreed to.

FOREIGN PRISON-MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 26th April.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned till Monday 26th April.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

APPEAL IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds Central) moved for leave to introduce a Bill "to make further provision with respect to the relief of the destitute poor in Ireland; and for other purposes connected therewith." He stated that there were only some slight alterations in the Bill from that of last year.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked if the question of the franchise for Poor Law elections would be dealt with?

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) asked whether the Bill would be sent to the Grand Committee or a Select Committee?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the Bill would be sent to the Grand Committee on Law. Franchise clauses would be foreign to the object of the Bill.

Bill presented, and Read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 197.]

BICYCLES (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR moved for leave to introduce a Bill to assimilate the law as to bicycles in Ireland to that which prevailed in England, where lights had to be shown and bells sounded.

MR. T. M. HEALY said it was quite true that this was the law in England, but then the law in England was administered by the County Councils, whereas in Ireland it would be a police affair. Besides, the hackney carmen were not compelled to exhibit lights, and why should the bicyclists?

Bill to make regulations with respect to bicycles and other similar machines in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. Attorney General for Ireland; presented, and Read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 198.]

NAVY AND MARINES (WILLS) ACT (1865) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BAKEHOUSES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MIDWIVES' REGISTRATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 3rd May.

PRISONERS' PERSONAL CORRECTION PROHIBITION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 13th May.

CHAFF-CUTTING MACHINES ACCIDENTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 29th April.

TROUT FISHING CLOSE TIME (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 12th May.

LONDON WATER COMPANIES AMALGAMATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Second Reading [7th April] further adjourned till Monday next.

LABOUR BUREAUX BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 25th May.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [29th January] further adjourned till Wednesday 12th May.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till To-morrow.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 3rd May.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTION.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion, "That the House do now Adjourn,"

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that when the First Lord of the Treasury mentioned a few minutes earlier the large amount of business he proposed to take on Monday, the forms of the House did not allow of any Question being asked in regard to it, and he now begged to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether ample time would be given for a discussion on foreign affairs on Monday. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that a Debate on foreign affairs, when those affairs were in a less pressing condition than at the present time, had often taken the whole day on a Motion for Adjournment over the Easter holidays. If it lasted the whole night, would the Government persist in the programme the right hon. Gentleman had laid down for Monday?

MR. J. P. FARRELL inquired on what day would the Budget be introduced?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he thought that the Budget would be introduced either on the Monday or the Thursday after the House re-assembled. There had already been six or seven discussions on Crete, and he hoped, whilst not desiring to unduly curtail discussion, the Debate on Monday would, therefore, be kept within fairly reasonable proportions. The business he had asked the House to transact was really a very moderate amount.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

Debate arising;

And, it being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House Adjourned at One o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 9th April 1897.

QUESTIONS.

MADAGASCAR.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any decision has been arrived at by the French Government with regard to concessions granted to foreigners by the late Queen of Madagascar?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): We have not yet heard, but have recently asked how the matter stands.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (SALE OF INTOXICANTS).

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the noble Lord the Member for Westhoughton whether the sale of liquor within the precincts of the House, which Mr. Attorney General has declared he considers to be illegal, is still carried on; and, if so, whether the Kitchen Committee propose to take any action in the matter?

LORD STANLEY (Lancashire, Westhoughton): I have only just seen the Question. I do not think the Kitchen Committee propose to make the slightest change. I shall put the Bill down every night, and I hope that the hon. Baronet will allow the Bill to go through.

SIR W. LAWSON: Until the noble Lord gets his remedy does he intend to go on breaking the law every day?

LORD STANLEY: Yes, Sir. [*Much laughter.*]

POSTAGE (EMBOSSED STAMPS).

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that an embossed stamp removed from a spoiled or unused telegraph form (A1) will be accepted in payment, or part payment, of a telegram, but that embossed stamps cut out from envelopes or wrappers will not be accepted in payment of postage for a letter; and whether he is aware that the embossed stamps cut from envelopes and used for postage are not only defaced by postal employés, but the addressee is fined double the actual postage?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General is aware that embossed stamps removed from spoiled or unused telegraph forms are accepted in payment or part payment of telegrams, and also that embossed stamps cut out from envelopes or wrappers are not accepted in payment of postage on letters. The 19th Section of the Post Office Act, 1870, distinctly directs that they shall not be so used, and directs that when they are so used the letter shall be dealt with as not prepaid. Embossed stamps improperly fixed to envelopes may in the hurry of stamping get defaced, but as they have already lost their value the owner of the letter is not injured.

MARRIED SOLDIERS (MEDICAL ATTENDANCE).

MR. ARTHUR JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that married soldiers who are not on the married establishment of their respective regiments have great difficulty in providing medical attendance for their wives and children, who thereby suffer in health; and whether he will arrange that in future these married soldiers shall have free medical attendance for their families?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): In cases of illness among the families of men not on the married roll, military medical officers are allowed to give their services if they are sought for, and there is no instance on record of their having been refused. In such cases, medicines may be issued from public stores, at the discretion of the principal medical officer.

TRAWLING IN SCOTTISH WATERS.

MR. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is the case that the trawler which was recently found by H.M.S. *Jackal* trawling in inshore waters under the Danish flag had on any former occasion been found trawling in inshore waters under the British flag; whether the authorities have reason to think that the Danish flag was only assumed for the occasion; and whether they are making inquiries into the matter?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): It has been ascertained that the *Dania* has been trawling in the Moray Firth, but, so far as is known, not in the inshore waters; nor was she detected at any time trawling under the British flag. It has also been ascertained definitely that she is a Danish vessel, being registered at the port of Esjborg, and there is, therefore, no reason to think that the Danish flag is assumed only on certain occasions.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that, under the specification of requirements for the Scottish Fishery Board's new cruiser, the dimensions of the vessel will be less than some of the trawlers which are in the habit of fishing in prohibited waters off the northern coasts of Scotland; and whether arrangements will be made to furnish the Fishery Board with a cruiser at least equal in size, strength, and speed to the fastest trawler?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I am unable to accept the accuracy of the assumption contained in the first part of the hon. Member's Question, nor is the matter of dimension more than one element to be considered. The Fishery Board will take care that the new vessel is fit in every respect for the service on which she is to be employed.

In answer to a further Question by Mr. WEIR,

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said: I do not think it would do to go into matters which necessarily are not settled, since the negotiations with the contractors are not concluded.

MR. WEIR: I shall go into the matter on the Estimates.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he will state the amount expended each year in alterations and repairs of the Scottish Fishery Board's cruiser *New Vigilant*, since the date of her purchase by the Board as a second-hand yacht; and whether he will state her coal carrying capacity?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The amounts spent annually on the fishery cruiser *Vigilant* for alterations and repairs have been as follows:—1894-95, £778 4s. 11d.; 1895-96, £310 10s.; 1896-97, £443 12s. These sums also include the ordinary expenditure for maintenance which any vessel would require. Her coal-carrying capacity is about 21 tons, which is sufficient to propel her about 1,100 miles under favourable circumstances.

WINCHESTER BARRACKS.

MR. W. H. MYERS (Winchester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will say whether the plans for rebuilding Winchester Barracks are ready, and also how soon the work will be commenced?

MR. BRODRICK: The site plan for the reconstruction of Winchester Barracks is now under consideration at the station. It is not possible, at present, to name a day for the commencement of the work, but it will be pushed forward.

PORT NESS HARBOUR, LEWIS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the arbitrator has given his award in the question in dispute in regard to the construction of the harbour at Port Ness, Lewis; and, if not, whether he will state the cause of the delay?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I am informed that the arbiter's award has now been transmitted to the Harbour Trustees, but a copy of it has not yet been received at the Scottish Office.

MODEL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) what are the terms of reference to the Committee charged by the Education Board with the duty of inquiring into the Irish Model Schools; (2) does the inquiry cover the case of Marlborough Street Model School, which is under the Board itself, and, if so, why do the Board require a Report on the condition of an institution of which they themselves are managers; (3) does the inquiry cover the question of the cost of education in Model Schools, which is stated in the Report for 1895 to be £4 a head, as against £1 16s. in Convent schools, and, if not, will this subject be also examined into; (4) will the Government abstain from asking the House for the grant for model schools until the result of the inquiry has been reported; and (5) will the Report and the Evidence be laid before Parliament?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds Central): The terms of reference are, "That a Committee of the whole Board be appointed to Report to the Board on the condition of the model schools." The answer to the second and third paragraphs is in the affirmative. The Marlborough Street Model School is not more under the Board than any other model school. I cannot give a reply to the fourth and fifth paragraphs until I know when the inquiry is likely to conclude, and until I see the Report?

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the evidence is being taken down in shorthand, will it be available?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have no information, but I will inquire.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Shall we have an opportunity of seeing the Report, and, if possible, the evidence?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I should not like to promise that without communicating with the Commissioners.

MILITARY HOSPITAL (FELIXSTOWE).

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it will be necessary to purchase land in order to use the approved site for the proposed Military Hospital at Felixstowe; whether the approved site is within 150 feet of the nearest residence, and about 100 yards from Manor Terrace; and whether, as the residents in Manor Terrace and adjacent houses have petitioned against the erection of this hospital in close proximity to their dwellings, as being prejudicial to their welfare and to the value of their property, he will consider if another site cannot be selected to the north of Landguard Fort on land belonging to the War Department, and away from the residences of those who visit Felixstowe as a health resort?

MR. BRODRICK: To meet local objections, some slight alteration in the site of the hospital is in contemplation, which will involve the purchase of a small plot of ground. The amended site will be about 220 yards from Manor Terrace; and it is hoped that arrangements will be made with the owner of one residence which is nearer. No site on War Department ground other than that selected is suitable.

WORKMISTRESSES (IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS).

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, can he state the nature of the proposals made to the Treasury by the Irish Education Commissioners for the increase of the salaries and results fees of workmistresses in Irish National schools; what sum of money was covered by the proposals; and what were the grounds on which the proposals were rejected?

MR. HANBURY: No, Sir. I cannot state the nature of any proposals submitted by a Department to the Treasury but not sanctioned by the latter, as such communications are confidential.

CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill, at present before the House; and whether, in view of his promise to favourably consider any Measure that would enable the Royal Canal Harbour at Longford to be enclosed, so as to prevent further loss of human life there, he will recommend the House to accept that Bill?

MR. HANBURY: The Bill in question, which was only issued on the 5th inst., is receiving consideration, and the Government will be prepared to state their views on it before the date fixed for Second Reading.

ENLISTMENT REGULATIONS.

MR. W. HAZELL (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that a large number of boys enlist falsely stating their ages as over 18, he will explain why the War Office considers that it is impracticable to insist upon recruits producing certificates of birth, while certifying surgeons under the Factory Act, 1878, Section 27, have power to require such certificates, and do regularly obtain them, when young persons apply for employment in a factory?

Mr. BRODRICK: Many men who desire to join the Army would find great difficulty in obtaining certificates of birth. To insist upon their production would mean the loss of many men to the Army. The number of young men who give false ages on enlistment is not large, and is annually decreasing.

CROMARTY FIRTH (ANCHORAGE).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Cromarty Firth is one of the safest places of anchorage for ships of war on the East Coast; and whether he will consider the advisability of fortifying the entrance to the Firth?

Mr. BRODRICK: Cromarty Firth is not regarded as of sufficient importance, either as a base of naval operations or as a mercantile haven, to justify the erection of defensive works.

TELEGRAPH OFFICES.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state the number of telegraph offices opened under guarantee in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, for each year since the transfer of the telegraphs to the State?

Mr. HANBURY: I cannot trouble the House by giving verbally, in answer to a Question, long strings of figures relating to England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland separately in each year for more than a quarter of a century, but the information shall be sent to the hon. Member. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

WATER SUPPLY (CAUSER, INVERNESS-SHIRE).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the inhabitants of the village of Causer, in the Badenoch District of Inverness-shire, obtain their water supply from the river Nethy; that since a recent outbreak of typhus fever the water has been pronounced to be polluted with sewage and unfit for drinking purposes; and that the pollution of the river has taken place within the last 40 years; and whether any steps have been taken to stop the pollution of the river above the village of Causer?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: The facts are substantially as stated in the first part of the Question, except that no such outbreak as is mentioned appears to have recently occurred. In order to secure a good water supply, the Local Authority got decree from the Court ordaining the inhabitants to provide it, which, unfortunately their poverty prevents them from implementing. The Local Authority have hitherto declined to take any other steps to secure this end, either by freeing the river from pollution or otherwise.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, when plans for the enlargement of a Voluntary School are submitted by the managers, the Education Department in giving or withholding its sanction takes into consideration the question whether the increased accommodation proposed is necessary, or whether its decision is based solely on the ground of conformity or otherwise of the plans with the rules of the Department?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir John Gorst, Cambridge University): The Education Department always gives its sanction to the enlargement of a Voluntary School if its rules are complied with, but it does not follow that the increased space is thereafter reckoned as part of the school accommodation of the district.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in view of the fact that the residue grants from the Beer and Spirit Duties, amounting to £740,000 a year, are available and largely applied for the purposes of technical education by local authorities in England and Wales, irrespective of whether these authorities levy rates for the purpose or not, the Department will consider the possibility of making such grants in aid of technical education in Ireland upon the same conditions, that is to say, whether the local authorities contribute or not, or whether it is their intention to continue the present arrangement?

Sir J. GORST: The proportion of the residue grants from the beer and spirit duties which is due to Ireland is allocated to the Commissioners of National Education and to the Intermediate Education Board. There is, in addition, a special technical education grant made to Ireland by the Science and Art Department. The Committee of Council do not intend to take the initiative in proposing any alteration of this arrangement.

QUARTER SESSIONS CASE (NAAS, CO. KILDARE).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that at a recent quarter sessions held in Naas, county Kildare, an officer of the 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers was sued by an old man 82 years of age for an aggravated assault because he was defending himself from an attack of a vicious dog, the property of Lieutenant Lonsdale, and that a decree was obtained for £2 against this officer, the County Court Judge remarking that his conduct was not above comment; and whether the case will be inquired into by the Military authorities?

Mr. BRODRICK: The facts of the case are thus given by the Military authorities in Ireland. The old man, without provocation, gave a severe kick to a puppy belonging to Lieutenant Lonsdale, who then pushed him off the pavement. Next day the old man came to the barracks and used such abusive and disgraceful language that the officer lost his temper and committed a trivial assault upon him. At Quarter Sessions the Plaintiff admitted that he had in no way suffered from the assault, and was awarded £2 instead of the £25 he claimed. The Judge did not comment adversely on the officer's conduct, and it is not proposed to make any further inquiry into the matter.

THIRD-CLASS RAILWAY TICKETS (IRELAND).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any reply has been received to the representations on the subject of a third-class carriage on the limited mail trains of the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland?

Mr. HANBURY: No reply has been received to the representations made to the railway company, who, it is understood, are considering the matter.

PETTY SESSIONS (BELLEEK, CO. FERMANAGH).

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the prosecution, at the Belleek, county Fermanagh, Petty Sessions on 8th December, of R. N. Barron, County Court Registrar, of Donegal, for discharging firearms on the public road, which was withdrawn by District Inspector Milling on his own responsibility; is he aware that Mr. Jones, R.M., presiding, expressed a wish that the case be proceeded with, and that Mr. Johnson, J.P., called the withdrawal a gross miscarriage of justice; and, if so, who is responsible for the statement that the case has been adjudicated on?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have communicated with Mr. Jones, R.M., in reference to this case, and he confirms the substance of the statement made by me on Friday last that the withdrawal of the prosecution was suggested by the Bench. Mr. Jones adds that Mr. Johnson did not make use of the words attributed to him in the Question. I am not aware who is responsible for the statement that the case had been adjudicated on. The statement was not made by me.

ARMY MANŒUVRES.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any final decision has now been come to by Her Majesty's Government with regard to the holding in the present year of those large manœuvres which they have declared to be important for the efficiency of the Army?

MR. BRODRICK: Considerable progress has been made with Army Measures in the present Session. The First Lord of the Treasury does not see his way at present to enabling us to proceed with the Manœuvres Bill, and therefore we must this year content ourselves with tactical exercises.

CANADIAN FAST STEAMSHIP SERVICE.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of the Dominion of Canada have signed a contract with Messrs. Paterson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, for the fast steamship service between Canada and this country; and, if so, whether the conditions as hitherto prescribed are now to be required of contractors, or whether, looking to the progress lately made in size and speed of vessels, increased speed will now be called for; and if he is able to state what subsidy for carrying the mails has been arranged for respectively by the British and Canadian Governments?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Government of the Dominion of Canada has signed a provisional agreement with Messrs. Peterson and Tate, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, for the fast steamship service between Canada and this country. The agreement is now under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, on whose approval it is contingent, and it would be premature to state its provisions.

LOCAL LOANS STOCK.

MR. PATRICK A. M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) is he aware that certain Corporations in Ireland desire to be allowed to pay off at par loans contracted by them with the Treasury, but are not permitted to do so owing to the existing rules in regard to Local Loans Stock; and (2) will he, in view of the advanced state of Parliamentary business, introduce a Bill this Session to enable Corporations in Ireland to relieve themselves from the usurious rate of interest at present charged by the Treasury?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): As far as I am aware, the first paragraph of the Question applies only to one Corporation in Ireland, which has been treated just in the same way as other local authorities in Great Britain. The interest charged cannot be called usurious. It was sanctioned by Parliament at the time that the loan was made. I will consider whether it is at all possible to extend to existing loans of this kind the provisions of the Bill which I hope to introduce.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK A. M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how much of the money allocated for the extension of light railway systems in Ireland is still available for schemes now proposed but not decided on; and will the Government in the present Session apply to Parliament for the allocation of any moneys that may be required for the further extension of light railways in Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The amount at present provisionally allocated to schemes under the Railways Act of last year does not leave any surplus available for other schemes. It is not the intention of Government to apply to Parliament for additional funds during the present Session.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in consequence of the resolution of the Grand Jury of Clare, at the Spring Assizes of 1896, asking for Government support for a railway connecting Lisdoonvarna with Ennistymon, and for a railway connecting Ennis with Scarriff, the Government, after inquiry, offered a free grant of money; and, if so, would he state the amount, and on what conditions; whether the railway project was rejected by the Grand Jury of Clare, although supported by the railway committee of the Grand Jury and every representative body in the district; and what steps does he now propose to take; and can he see his way to hold over the grant until a more impartial jury can be summoned to reconsider the matter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The offer made by the Government was that the construction of the line from Ennis to Scarriff would be recommended to the Treasury under the Act of 1896, provided that one-half of the estimated cost of construction and equipment of the line, amounting in all to £125,000, were raised locally, and that a resolution in favour of the scheme were passed by a decisive majority of the Grand Jury. Subject to the fulfilment of these conditions, the Government was prepared to defray the other moiety of the estimated cost of construction. The scheme, however, was rejected by the Grand Jury. I believe the railway committee was in favour of it. The grant cannot now be held over, as negotiations are in progress for otherwise disposing of the money.

SALISBURY PLAIN (PURCHASE).

Captain PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will agree to the Motion for a Return as to the purchase of Salisbury Plain, which stands on the Paper this day?

Mr. BRODRICK: Negotiations are still in progress with reference to considerable tracts of land. It would be impossible at present to give the information. At the proper time full information will be given to Parliament.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (GUERNSEY).

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, (1) whether the Island of Guernsey is entirely without a telephone exchange service; (2) whether he is aware that the States of Guernsey resolved, on the 17th June last, to undertake the service under licence from the Postmaster General, and voted a sum of money for the purpose; (3) whether the Postmaster General has instituted an inquiry as to the advisability of offering a scheme of telephonic communication to the States of Guernsey which will be acceptable to the inhabitants of the island, and has received a report of such inquiry; and (4) whether, in the event of such scheme being more expensive to the said inhabitants than their own scheme, or inadequate for their needs, the Postmaster General can state any objection to granting forthwith to the States of Guernsey the licence asked for, under the conditions laid down in the Treasury Minute, in order that they may, at their own expense and risk, and subject to the usual payments to the Postmaster General, carry out and work their own scheme?

Mr. HANBURY: The answer to the first three paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The scheme for the establishment of a telephone exchange system in Guernsey by the Post Office is now being considered by the Treasury, and I am not, therefore, in a position to give a definite answer to the remainder of the Question.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. C. J. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, when effect will be given to the recommendation of the Committee that it shall be an invariable rule that split duties be so arranged that the officer performing them may enjoy during each 24 hours nine clear unbroken hours at his own home, exclusive of a reasonable time for the journey from his own home to the office and from the office to his own home?

Mr. HANBURY: The arrangement of duties in the manner described is not a measure which can be carried into effect without careful examination and rearrangements of the work at some of the larger offices; and some appreciable time may elapse before the scheme can be brought into full operation. The change, however, has already been made at many offices, and it is the intention of the Department to make it general as soon as possible.

*Mr. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the meeting of telegraphic officials held in Belfast on Saturday last; and whether, considering that the complaints of the postal and telegraphic officials as to the Report of the Tweedmouth Committee have become general all over the country, he will, during the Recess, give consideration to the cause of these complaints with the view of remedying the same?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General's attention has not been called to the meeting of telegraphic officials held in Belfast on Saturday last. It has been already stated that the Report of the

Tweedmouth Committee has been approved by the Postmaster General and accepted by the Treasury as permanently satisfying all reasonable claims on the part of the classes included in the inquiry, and it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to re-open questions which, in their judgment, have been decided with liberality to the various classes in the Post Office and at considerable expense to the taxpayers.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is now in a position to state if the vacancies in the class of First-class Sorting Clerks, General Post Office, Dublin, will be filled up irrespective of the Tweedmouth recommendation of classification abolition; whether he is aware that officers qualified in every way have been looking forward to these positions for the past two years; and, considering the serious dissatisfaction that exists in the General Post Office, Dublin, since the Tweedmouth Report has been issued, if he will meet the wishes of the staff in this case?

Mr. HANBURY: Yes, Sir. It has been decided that vacancies which existed in the First Class of Sorting Clerks before the 1st instant shall be filled up.

CUSTOMS OFFICERS.

*Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction existing among the Assistants of Customs and out-door officers, owing to the refusal by the Treasury of the proposals of the Board of Customs with reference to the men who had entered the service before 1888; whether he is aware the recent changes have been so applied and emoluments so cut down and promotion so slow that the average value of the position to men of 10 years' service is less now than it has been hitherto; and whether, in view of the serious statements made by these men and their representatives, he will have inquiry made into the matter and due consideration given to their claims?

Mr. HANBURY: The emoluments for overtime attendance have diminished because the amount of overtime worked has decreased, but these emoluments have not otherwise been cut down. The rate of promotion, so far from being slower, is now slightly increased. In 1894 the average service of the men promoted to the rank of Examining Officer was 15¼ years; in 1895 and 1896 it was 14 11-12 years, and this year 14 years. The salaries of the men named in the Question are all much higher than when they entered the Service. Their annual increment of 30s. was raised to 50s. in 1890, and to £3 in 1894, and is now £5; while their maximum has been raised from £100 to £105. It is true that they are now, as Assistants, doing more important work than the average work of Outdoor Officers, but they are being paid on a higher scale. It would be unreasonable to antedate that scale to the time when they were doing the inferior work.

LAND COMMISSION.

*Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, considering that no intimation is now given to the solicitors for landlords and tenants as to the fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners, whether he will suggest to the landlords, that in the interest and for the convenience of the parties and their solicitors, printed slips of the decisions be prepared and sent to them; and whether he is aware that this method would not only meet the necessities of the case, but it would also relieve the deputy registrars who are already overburdened with work?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The preparation of slips, as suggested, would retard the issue to the parties of the notifications of the decisions of the Court, and thus curtail the limit of time in which they may appeal against such decisions. I stated on Tuesday last that the decisions are frequently, at the request of solicitors, communicated to the latter, but that the Commissioners do not propose to issue any directions on the subject.

*Mr. McCARTAN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that this would not cause one day's delay, or involve much trouble, and would be a very great convenience?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I can only give the answer supplied to me by the Commissioners. These are not matters in which the Executive interferes. It appears to me that the hon. Gentleman's questions are entirely directed to the convenience of the solicitors, and not to the convenience of the Commissioners at all.

*Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the desirability of issuing as a Parliamentary Paper, and circulating it among Members of this House, the form of pink paper now used by the Sub-Commissioners engaged in fixing fair rents in Ireland?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Paper referred to will be found embodied in the Land Commission Rules of 2nd January last, which were presented to Parliament on the 5th ultimo.

*Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that in all cases where the valuation of the holding is over £10, the tenant, on his application to have fair rent fixed, is bound to give on the back of his notice particulars of the improvements made by him or his predecessors in order to get them exempted from rent, and that he cannot claim exemption for any improvement not mentioned on the notice; whether the landlord, without giving any notice to the tenant, can make claim for improvements and contributions made by him at any time; and whether, considering that in Ireland the farmers generally kept neither books nor records of their improvements, while the landlords as a rule had every contribution entered against the tenant in his books, the tenants may in future be allowed the same rights as to proof of improvements as are now exercised by the landlords in the Land Courts?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The subject raised by this Question was fully discussed and dealt with by my right hon. Friend the Attorney General for Ireland on the occasion of the Motion of the hon. Member for East Mayo on the 11th ultimo that Rule 130 of the Land Commission Rules of the 2nd January last should be annulled. It is not proposed to alter the existing practice, which is similar to that prescribed by the Rules of 1883, and has ever since been followed.

*Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state what is the rota under which the sittings of the Chief Land Commissioners is fixed; whether he can explain for what reason Mr. Murrough O'Brien, one of the Chief Commissioners, is never appointed to sit on appeals and re-hearings in Belfast or Armagh, where questions vitally important to large numbers of Ulster tenants are heard and disposed of; and if he will give the number of the sittings of the Chief Commission for re-hearings and appeals held since September last, with the names of the Commissioners who formed the Court on each occasion?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: There is no rota for the sittings of the Chief Land Commissioners. The composition of the Court when hearing appeals is arranged by the Commissioners amongst themselves, having regard to their other official engagements. The Executive have no power in the matter. As a matter of fact, Mr. O'Brien has sat in Belfast to hear fair-rent appeals, which included cases from Co. Armagh. There have been 15 weekly sittings to hear fair-rent appeals since the month of October last. Mr. Justice Bewley and Mr. Fitzgerald have sat at all of these, Mr. Wrench at five, Mr. Lynch at four, and Mr. O'Brien at four.

HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if he can say when H.M.S. *Black Prince* is expected to be ready for docking at Haulbowline?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): The local contractors have promised to complete the refit of the *Black Prince* by May 14th, and she will be placed in dock as soon as convenient after that date.

SCHOOL BOARDS (WORKING BALANCE).

Mr. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, while the Education Department urge School Boards to keep a working balance in hand, and have made this working balance practically obligatory by disallowing until recently payment of interest on bank overdrafts, the money raised for the purposes of this working balance has been treated by the Department as applicable to the expenditure of the financial year; whether, while the Department claim that this working balance brought forward from the previous year is available in diminution of the school rate, thus excluding some Boards from participating in the special grant under Section 97 of the Act of 1870, the Boards are not allowed to take credit for the working balance carried forward as a necessary expenditure; and whether the Department will take this matter into consideration in connection with the Bill for increasing the grant under Section 97?

Sir J. GORST: The balance which a School Board has in hand at the beginning of a financial year is, of course, applicable to the expenditure of that year, and in estimating "the rate required for the purposes of the annual expenses of the School Board," the balances in hand at the beginning and end of the financial year would be taken into account. The practice of the Department in regard to this matter will be considered by the Committee of Council in connection with the Bill for amending Section 97.

PIERS (LEWIS).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has received a communication from the Lewis District Committee expressing deep regret that the promised grant for the construction of piers at Bayble and Valtos, Island of Lewis, has been withdrawn; whether he is aware that plans for these piers have been approved by the Board of Trade, and lodged within the specified time; that tenders have been advertised for; and that the people of the district have undertaken to give a large proportion of the cost of the piers in free labour; and whether, in view of these circumstances, he will arrange for the construction of these piers at an early date?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: As this Question was only put down on the Paper to-day, I must request the hon. Member to postpone it until after the holidays.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any, and, if so, what, reply has been received to the representations made by the Postmaster General on the subject of an improved Limited Mail Service from Dundalk to Cavan, Belturbet and Enniskillen?

Mr. HANBURY: No reply has yet been received from the Great Northern (Ireland) Railway Company to the representations made by the Postmaster General on the subject of an improved Limited Mail Service from Dundalk to Cavan, Belturbet and Enniskillen, but it is understood that they are considering the matter.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: The Railway Company has been considering the matter for a month, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will hurry up their answer.

Mr. HANBURY: I will do my best.

WATERFORD, DUNGARVAN AND LISMORE RAILWAY.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, in view of the fact that the directors of the Waterford, Dungarvan, and Lismore Railway Company from their own resources provided £1,500 towards the renewal in iron of a long wooden viaduct, and from the same source contributed £500 towards the purchase of a locomotive, and also offered to pay half the expenses of equipment of the line with electric staff, which offer the Board of Works declined; and of the fact that the report made by the Board of Works engineer is withheld from the Company, whether the Government will have an independent inquiry made by a competent expert before appointing a receiver, this expert not to be under control of the Board of Works, and whose report shall be available to the public, that the true facts concerning the line may be made known?

The hon. Member also asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will undertake to restrain action on the part of the Board of Works in Ireland in regard to the Waterford, Dungarvan, and Lismore Railway until the Estimates for the Board of Works come before the

House, in order that opportunity may be given for Debate, and that the views of the ratepayers, whose interests are much larger than those of the Treasury, may be ascertained?

Mr. HANBURY: I am not aware of the amount contributed or offered by the directors from their private resources. It is the fact that the report made by the Board of Works engineer, which was, of course, confidential, has not been communicated to the Company. The Board of Works is the public body to whom such duties belong, and it ought not in my opinion to hand over a duty of this kind to a third person, particularly as the present Chairman is specially acquainted with railway management. I hope it may be possible to discuss the Board of Works Vote soon after the Easter Recess, and if that should be so, I would postpone any final action until that opportunity for discussion has been afforded. In any case no such action shall be taken until after the Easter Recess.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) if he could state in what form and at what date the Great Southern and Western Railway Company made an offer to purchase the Waterford and Dungarvan Railway, and was the offer made through the Board of Works; (2) were they officially informed that the railway was in such financial embarrassment that it could not pay the interest due to the Treasury; and (3) have the Great Southern and Western Railway Company any statutory power to make such an offer, or fulfil it if accepted?

Mr. HANBURY: An offer of £120,000 was recently made to the Board of Works to purchase the interest of the Treasury, £93,000 of capital and arrears of interest. I do not feel justified in stating from whom the offer came without the consent of the persons concerned.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked where the Great Southern and Western Railway Company got the statutory power to make such an offer?

Mr. HANBURY: I don't know that the Great Southern and Western Railway Company come into the matter at all, and I cannot express an opinion.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman said yesterday that such an offer was made by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, and I ask now where they got the statutory authority to make such an offer?

Mr. HANBURY: I don't think I said that. I said it came from other quarters. I don't think I mentioned the name of the Company at all.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon, but he stated—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can inform the House if any estimate has been made of the extent to which the new grant to poor School Board districts is likely to be diminished in the second year?

Sir J. GORST: It is impossible to make such an estimate. The total grant may not be decreased at all. Individual School Boards may increase their expenditure; and fresh School Boards may come under the Act.

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the varying degree in which the proposals of the Bill for Necessitous School Boards will affect the interests of the ratepayers in a great number of towns, especially the more populous towns and school districts in all parts of the country, and having regard to the fact that the Return showing the operation of the Bill cannot be issued for some days, he will defer the Second Reading of the Bill till after the Recess, and afford some opportunity for the ratepayers of these towns and school districts to consider the proposals of the Bill, and make any representations they think advisable to the Government and to their representatives in this House before the discussion on the Second Reading of the Bill?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): This Question raises a subject which was the matter of Debate last night. I then suggested, in order to avoid what some hon. Members had an objection to—namely, taking the Second Reading of the Poor School Boards Bill on Monday—that we should adjourn a day earlier, on the understanding that a certain number of non-controversial Bills should be taken and that there should be an opportunity given to my right hon. Friend the

Chief Secretary to introduce his Bill, which is down on the Paper as the Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill. I have taken such means as are in my power to communicate with Gentlemen opposite, and I gather that that arrangement would not be unsatisfactory. I said that if that were understood I would so draw the Resolution, which would be moved on Monday as the first Order with reference to rising for the holidays, that —first, we should rise at the end of the sitting; and, secondly, the Twelve o'clock Rule would be suspended to dispose of the business which I have mentioned.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): What are the non-contentious Bills referred to?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I read them out last night.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask at what hour it is proposed that the Irish question should be opened, because I understand that the Cretan discussion will last till midnight? At that hour it would be unfair to take the Irish Bill.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I quite agree that it would be unfortunate if the introduction of the Irish Bill should be thrust back too late; but I understand that part of the arrangement is, that the Debate on the Adjournment—which will, no doubt, be important —should not be extended to undue length; and I shall put down the Irish Bill as first Order after the Motion for the Adjournment. I hope that it will come on not later than Ten o'clock. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR W. HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.): I understand that a reasonable time is to be given for the Motion for the Adjournment, and a sufficient time reserved for the discussion of the Irish Bill on its introduction. That Bill is not, I believe, opposed by the Irish Members. The discussion on the Motion for the Adjournment should be concluded at something like the hour which the right hon. Gentleman has stated; and I understand that, in case the discussion should overlap that hour to a certain extent, the Twelve o'clock Rule is to be suspended, not with a view to any lengthened discussion, but in order to dispose of the non-contentious Measures of which the right hon. Gentleman has spoken. That is the proposal, as I understand it, and I think it is a very reasonable proposal. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked the First Lord of the Treasury when the House would have an opportunity of discussing South African affairs, especially with regard to the Transvaal?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I cannot give my hon. Friend any fixed date for the discussion of affairs in South Africa. That will have to be arranged after Easter when we come to allocate our time. The Secretary of State for the Colonies informs me, however, that he is about to lay Papers on the Table, and they will be in the hands of hon. Members immediately after the holidays.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Can we hope for an early day?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That will depend on the rival claims for Supply on Fridays.

CRETE.

MR. T. C. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Sultan of Turkey has taken any steps to effect the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Crete, in obedience to the recent demand of the Great Powers; and, if so, whether he will state what steps the Sultan has taken to accomplish that object?

MR. CURZON: Though the Powers have made representations at Constantinople as to the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, no such demand as is spoken of in the Question has been made by them; nor can I say what steps the Sultan has so far taken in the matter.

SIR EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Attorney General (1) whether the allied Powers of Germany, Russia, Austria, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom have, in the event of the Grecian Government declining to withdraw their armed forces from Crete, arranged that the Piræus, with other harbours of Greece, are to be blockaded; (2) if so, will the blockade be belligerent or pacific; and (3) can he inform the House what length of public notification, both under the rules of international law and also of international usage, will be necessary before neutral vessels (whether carrying contraband of war or other merchandise) can be debarred from entering and leaving Greek ports?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight): I am not able to answer the first paragraph of the Question. The intentions of the Powers cannot be announced until a definite decision has been taken, nor whether the blockade will be a pacific or a blockade *jure gentium*, which would imply the existence of a state of war between the Powers and Greece. If such a blockade should be decided on, and if, as is probable, a pacific blockade, it will be applicable to Greek vessels only. In the event of a belligerent blockade, no doubt the usual practice will be followed of allowing the vessels of neutral Powers already in the blockaded ports to complete their cargoes within a reasonable time and sail at once. Neutral vessels arriving with cargoes for blockaded ports would be liable to be turned back from the date of the commencement of the blockade.

TRISTAN DA CUNHA ISLAND.

Mr. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can see his way to provide the inhabitants of the Island of Tristan Da Cunha with a resident medical missionary in compliance with their prayer, repeated from year to year, and in conformity with the advice of the Officer commanding H.M.S. *Widgeon* in 1895?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I fear that Her Majesty's Government cannot do more for the islanders of Tristan da Cunha than send one of Her Majesty's ships to pay a yearly visit, and that everything further must be left to voluntary effort.

ARMY RIFLE MEETING (AMMUNITION).

Captain CHALONER (Wilts, Westbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what proportion of ammunition is allotted to the Army Rifle Meeting, as compared with the Bisley Meeting; whether that allotted for Bisley is issued free; and whether the ammunition hitherto used at the Army Rifle Meeting is charged for at the higher rate of £4 10s. per thousand, or at the lower rate of £3 per thousand?

Mr. BRODRICK: Free issues of ammunition are made to all recognised Army associations. The quantities are liberal, and depend upon the number of troops in the various districts where the meetings are held. If these limits are exceeded a charge is made for the excess issues. The present charge is £4 7s. 6d. per thousand.

MUSSELL BEDS.

Mr. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can say definitely when the schedule of mussell beds prepared by the Fishery Board will be laid upon the Table of the House?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: The schedule of mussell beds referred to by the hon. Member was presented to Parliament on the 18th ult., and the final revise for press was sent to the printers on the 31st ult. I have no doubt the Paper will be circulated very shortly, and I have brought the matter under the attention of the Stationery Office with this object in view.

IMPORT DUTY ON SPIRITS IN AFRICA.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that, under Article 94 of the General Act of the Brussels Conference 1889-90, it is obligatory that the question of the revision of the import duties on alcoholic liquor in the specified zone should be submitted for revision at the end of the sixth year, whether he can state if there is any likelihood of a fresh conference being speedily summoned to meet?

Mr. CURZON: As I said in the Debate on Friday last, the question of summoning a fresh conference is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, but it is as yet too early to say whether the project, to which they are themselves favourable, is likely to be realised.

LAW OFFICES.

Mr. C. E. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the payment of the salary of a clerk in a law office, aged over 65, having been objected to, and it having been ascertained that the Treasury Minute, dated 12th December 1890, did not apply to the law offices, and Bills having been introduced into Parliament in the Sessions of 1893, 1894, and 1895, with a view to the making of similar regulations for the retirement of the clerks and others in the law offices, any steps have been taken since the Bill of 1895 was withdrawn to carry out the recommendations of the Ridley Commission in the law offices?

MR. HANBURY: I understand that an Order making regulations as to the retirement of clerks is about to be issued by the Presidents of the Divisions of the High Court.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

SIR EDWARD GOURLEY: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, on the celebration of the 60th year of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's reign, arrangements are intended to be made for Members of both Houses of Parliament, together with one or two members of their families, to take part in the thanksgiving ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral, and also to witness the procession at Westminster, similar to those made at Westminster and the neighbourhood for the celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee?

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. A. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Yes, Sir, seats will be provided for Members of both Houses of Parliament to witness the Royal procession on June 22. It will be impossible to provide seats at St. Paul's Cathedral. I may add that I hope to be able to provide accommodation for the officials of the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

WEIGHING CATTLE (SCOTLAND).

MR. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL (Fife, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that the Committee of Weights and Measures of the County Council of Fife have declared against the continued use of dial weighbridges in auction marts, on account of their uncertainty when indicating the weight of live stock, and have recommended that if dial machines are to be continued at all for determining the weight of cattle, the space on the graduated dial plate should not be less than half an inch for each seven pound division; and whether he has sanctioned this latter suggestion; and, if so, whether he will issue a Memorandum to local authorities on the subject?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): No, Sir; I was not aware that the Committee referred to had expressed any opinion on the subject of weighing machines generally. In the suggestions we have issued for the guidance of market authorities and auctioneers, in regard to such machines, we have expressed the opinion that the figures should be as large and the graduations as distinct as circumstances permit, and the legal denominations of weight should alone be indicated. I do not think it would be desirable or practicable to go beyond this at the present time.

RETAIL LICENCES (IRELAND).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return relating to Retail Licences (Ireland) which stands on the Paper for this day?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Information on the subject, for the year 1895, will be found in a Table at Page 90 of the Return of Judicial Statistics for that year presented to Parliament (see Paper No. 8,207 C, of 1896.) I am inquiring when the similar Return for 1896 will be laid on the Table. The information is tabulated in these Returns by counties and not by baronies, and I am not certain whether it is available in the latter form.

TRANSVAAL.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to secure the punishment of the Boers, who cruelly murdered Trooper Black, then a prisoner and unarmed, at Blauwberg, early in January of this year?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I caused special inquiry to be made as to the shooting of this man, whose identity is still in doubt. The evidence before me—which I am not at liberty to publish—shows that the prisoner was shot while attempting to escape. I am advised that this is in accordance with the customs of war, and affords no ground for a representation to the Government of the South African Republic.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay what Papers he can in regard to this case on the Table? [*Cries of* "Order, order!"] Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this statement as to the attempted escape of the trooper is denied on very strong evidence?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It all depends on what is strong evidence. [*Laughter.*] Most things in South Africa are both asserted and denied—[*laughter*]—but as I have already said, I cannot publish the Papers, because they involve confidential evidence, the publication of which would be objected to by the persons who gave it, and might possibly bring them into trouble.

RETIRED SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' EMPLOYMENT.

Mr. A. M. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government proposed to give effect to any of the recommendations of the Select Committee on Retired Soldiers' and Sailors' Employment, the Report of which was presented in 1895; whether he was aware that in the Post Office the number of Reserve and discharged soldiers with characters exemplary, very good, and good, for whom employment had been found, had fallen from 1,230 in 1892 to 543 in 1896, that in other Government Departments only 76 such appointments had been made during the past year; and whether the Government would consider the desirability of at once dealing comprehensively with the subject of finding more State employment for Reserve and discharged soldiers, especially in the Post Office?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The Government is quite alive to the importance of the subject raised by my hon. Friend, but there are certain difficulties in connection with carrying out his wishes to the fullest extent, one of them being that the Post Office authorities naturally feel that there should be a certain amount of promotion in the Service for those who have worked in the Service. But the question shall have the fullest consideration.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the First Lord of the Treasury give the Irish Members some indication when the Irish Estimates will be taken after the Easter Recess? I would suggest May 14.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I will endeavour to arrange for May 14, if that meets with the general approval of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MOTION.

SUNDAY CLOSING.

Bill to restrict the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor on Sundays, Christmas Day and Good Friday, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tritton, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Howard, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Whittaker, and Colonel Williams; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 12th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 201.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY.

Considered in Committee:—

[The Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. J. W. Lowther, in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897-8.

Class I.

1. £238,000, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) asked for explanations with regard to various items making up the Vote, including charges for maintenance and repair of buildings at Cardiff, Bristol, and Somerset House. An extra item this year came from Cardiff on account of the erection of a new Custom House, and he wished to know what was the reason for erecting these new buildings at Cardiff? Was the estimated actual cost of £5,000 to be followed later on by an estimate for a much larger amount? And why, if new buildings were necessary, was the site of the present Custom House not utilised? There was another new item, a large item, for a new laboratory at Somerset House, including a provision for electric light. Why was it necessary to light these new offices in that particular manner? Then again, in regard to new offices in Bristol, he could not understand on what principle it should be put in the Estimates that "the purchase will not be completed until the buildings are erected." That seemed a very extraordinary arrangement, and called for some explanation. He put these matters before the First Commissioner of Works, because he thought the Department was more parsimonious in its treatment of Scotland as compared with England. The notion appeared to prevail that everything ought to be done on a larger scale with regard to England. He was entitled to point out the great disparity between the amount the Government expended on Inland Revenue buildings in England as compared with Scotland, and to insist on fair play.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) assured the hon. Gentleman that there was no difference at all in the treatment which Scotland and England received in regard to demands made upon the Office of Works year by year. Any apparent inequality was accounted for by the fact that they could not deal with the whole of the demands for new buildings in any one year, and they had to deal with them more or less according to the requirements and necessities for buildings to be completed by a certain date. So far as policy was concerned, they knew no difference as between Scotland and England, except that of first urgency. With regard to Cardiff, they asked for an expenditure of £5,000 for buildings; the site was paid for last year, and they hoped to finish the building next year. The delay which had occurred had been owing to legal difficulties in regard to title and conveyance, and also as to some existing lights. The question had been at last settled between the owner and the authorities, and the arrangements and buildings appeared to satisfy all the interests concerned. With regard to Somerset House, they were building near Clement's Inn at present a large laboratory, and, considering the important nature of the work to be carried on in it, it was necessary to go in for expenditure on electric light. With respect to Bristol, it had been arranged that the actual purchase money for the site should not be paid until the building was completed. The arrangement was one which was somewhat unusual, but it was one which the particular local circumstances appeared to justify. On the general question of the maintenance of buildings in England and Scotland there was no difference at all between the treatment of the two countries, though they had not the same demands from Scotland as from England.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that Scotland received similar treatment to England. He denied that. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take steps to put matters on a more satisfactory footing as between Scotland and England. Scotland was being starved to death. Then as to lights, fuel and household articles in the post offices of the two countries, he found a great discrepancy between them. If London, for example, was spending too much, the question should be examined, and if Scotland was starved in the matter of such articles, the right hon. Gentleman should treat Scotland more liberally.

MR. CALDWELL drew attention to the post office buildings, and pointed out that there should be taken into consideration in the cost of such buildings their probable liability to asessment for local rates. A building was erected on a valuable site, and the locality asked that it should be an ornament to the town. No sooner was a building of the kind erected than the Government was come down upon by the local authorities, who said that the valuation of the building and the site ought to be a great deal more than it was, and therefore more money paid to the local rates. The Treasury, he thought, could only deal with this question when the buildings were being erected, and it should say, "We will erect the buildings on a less valuable site; this will suit the purposes of the post office equally well, and we can erect plainer buildings." They were entitled, therefore, to complain of the Government for putting up expensive buildings, where equally suitable buildings for a post office might suffice, thereby rendering the Government less liable to a probable large amount of taxation. The right hon. Gentleman should take into consideration the ultimate liablity that would follow from the erection of expensive buildings, and an understanding should be come to with the locality that if they wanted ornamental and expensive buildings, such as appeared to be the case in England, the local taxation should not be increased. In Scotland their requirements in this respect were more modest.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS pointed out that the Secretary to the Treasury was the official who should properly answer for the Post Office. The arrangements with regard to the sites for post offices were made by the Post Office Department. The doctrine of the hon. Member would, however, be an unpopular one, for every town seemed to desire the erection of a building which should be a credit to it. Scotsmen, he found, were as keen about the beautification of their towns as the English people.

Vote agreed to.

2. £159,100 to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) appealed to the First Commissioner on the subject of the maintenance and protection of ancient monuments. He wished to know whether it was the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had taken advantage of the clever arrangement made by the Navy League for the decoration of the Nelson Column in October last to engage a steeplejack for a small sum of money to effect certain repairs on the top of the monument? Had a contribution been made to the Navy League towards the considerable expense incurred by them in erecting the marvellous network of ladders up the column? Could the right hon. Gentleman reconcile his patriotic conduct in this matter with the conduct of another Department, which he would not name, which allowed the memory of Nelson to be covered with obloquy? [*Cries of* "Order!" *and laughter.*]

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: Order, order! I do not think that the hon. and gallant Gentleman can contend that the Nelson Monument is an ancient monument. [*Laughter.*]

Vote agreed to.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,—

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for Expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House."

Mr. WEIR proposed, "That Item A (salaries, wages, and allowances), be reduced by £10, in respect of Holyrood Palace," in order to call attention to the insufficient staff and the charging of fees at Holyrood Palace. He was in favour of getting rid of the fees. The pictures in the Banqueting Hall of the Palace were mostly daubs, which were not worth 60s. apiece. If the right hon. Gentleman would send to Holyrood some of the Raphael's and Murillo's from the National Gallery it would at least contain something worth paying to see. He begged to move to reduce the Vote by £10 in respect of Holyrood Palace.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that he promised last year to give this question every attention, and he had come to the conclusion that it was an anomaly to charge fees for viewing a Royal Palace in Edinburgh, when the same practice did not prevail in connection with Hampton Court and some other old palaces in England. He was not in a position to make any change this year, but he was prepared to say that, subject to certain arrangements to be made with the Corporation of Edinburgh, this item for fees appearing in the Appropriation-in-Aid would not again appear.

Mr. WEIR asked leave to withdraw his Amendment?

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could make arrangements for giving the public greater facilities for viewing Buckingham Palace, which contained valuable collections of Dutch pictures and china. At present few people ever saw them. These collections, he believed, were made over to the nation by George IV., and, therefore, it was only reasonable that the public should be permitted to see them. Palaces in this country were, generally speaking, less accessible to the public than palaces in foreign countries.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) thought it would be a great boon to the public to admit them to Buckingham Palace at certain times of the year when Her Majesty was not in residence. There were also works of art in St. James's Palace to which the public would be very glad to have access.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) observed that St. James's Palace was a very ugly collection of buildings on one of the best sites in London, and asked whether there was any intention of demolishing it and of erecting in its place a building with greater pretension to architectural beauty.

Sir HENRY HOWORTH (Salford, S.) agreed that it would be an immense boon to the public and students of art if they could be given freer access to Buckingham Palace, and suggested that a popular official catalogue should be prepared. He also thought that when the Palace was empty, it would be reasonable to admit the public to the gardens under proper regulations. He did not share the view of the hon. Member for Lynn Regis with regard to St. James's Palace, which was a building of great historical interest. That interest was continuous. Only the other day he was turning over some correspondence in the great Manchester Library, and found some letters written by the General who commanded the famous regiment which was in charge of the House when Cromwell cleared it. After the General's marriage, Cromwell assigned him St. James's Palace as a residence, and it was curious to come across his letters written from there; they were all headed "James's," the word palace being designedly omitted. There was one other story which he should like to recall to hon. Members' minds in this connection. When Queen Anne had her famous quarrel with the Duchess of Marlborough, the latter was living in St. James's Palace, and the Queen ordered the Chamberlain to turn Her Grace out, and put all her furniture into the courtyard. The Duchess revenged herself by buying a plot of land close by on which she built Marlborough House, but the Queen would never allow her to make an approach on the side of the grounds next to the palace. That accounted for the long blank wall without a gateway that faced the Palace. This wall, he thought, might be made a little more sightly.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) hoped it would be found possible to throw Buckingham Palace and gardens open to the public at certain seasons. The grounds covered 40 acres and were very beautiful. In Berlin and other Continental capitals it would be thought very strange that so large a garden should be closed to the public. Of course there was no thought of interfering with Her Majesty's privacy.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLES said he understood the suggestion to be that Her Majesty should be approached, and asked to permit Buckingham Palace to be seen when the Court was not in residence. Hon. Members would recognise that there was a difference between the case of Buckingham Palace and the case of Hampton Court or the Tower, but this was not a matter for his decision. However, he would consider the matter and take care that the opinions of hon. Members were duly represented to the Department concerned. ["Hear, hear!"] On the subject of St. James's Palace, he did not share the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Lynn Regis, having always been under the impression that that was a building of which the nation was proud, and which they would be sorry to see removed. It was originally built by Henry VIII., and for many years the Sovereigns resided there.

Mr. WEIR proposed, "That Item E (Maintenance and Repairs), be reduced by £10, in respect of Holyrood Palace," the furniture and tapestries of which had been injured. He hoped steps would be taken to protect them in future.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he had had his attention called to the matter.

He had visited Holyrood Palace, and saw that there was some ground for complaint. There was no doubt that the tapestries were injured some years ago, but greater care had been taken of them since then, and he did not think it likely that the injury would be repeated. The tapestries had been repaired.

MR. WEIR asked if the right hon. Gentleman would have a railing put round the tapestries?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he would not pledge himself to that at present, as he was not certain how far it would be feasible, but he would bear the suggestion in mind.

MR. WEIR asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES called attention to the expenditure on fuel, light, water, and household articles in several of the "grace and favour" Palaces. He would like some little account of these items in regard to St. James's Palace, Kensington Palace, and Hampton Court.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said there was no case in which the tenants of "grace and favour" residences received light and fuel, and in these cases the expenditure must be for the general keeping up of the buildings. Very great care was exercised to watch these items, but he would further look into the matter.

MR. CALDWELL thought the right hon. Gentleman's answer in regard to Holyrood Palace was satisfactory so far as the future was concerned. He wished, however, to know what was the earliest date when the fees would be abolished?

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the hon. Member could not go back to that point, as the Amendment had been withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £70,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. CALDWELL said he did not see why some of the parks in London should be maintained out of the Imperial funds, as in the large towns in the provinces similar parks were provided at the expense of the localities. The maintenance of these parks came to a considerable sum. They had to pay for Kensington Gardens a sum of nearly £5,000, Regent's Park upwards of £7,000, and St. James's, Green, and Hyde Parks £24,000 for maintenance. Comparing the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, he observed that in the latter country all that was provided was a small sum for the Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh, and Holyrood Park. It was argued that people came from the provinces to London and went to such parks as Hyde Park, but they went in like manner to the parks in Paris, and did not in that case have to pay for the privilege. Hyde Park added immensely to the amenity of London, and enhanced the value of the surrounding property. He admitted that an exception might be made in such a case as Kew Gardens, on the ground that it was an institution of a national character. Seeing there was a question of financial relations between England and Scotland pending, it was the duty of Scotch Members to object when they found items in the Estimates in the case of England for which they paid locally in Scotland. The Thames Embankment, instead of being under the control of the London County Council, might just as well be kept up by Imperial funds. The public parks in London ought to be under the control of the London County Council. While the Imperial right of property in Hyde Park and other parks should be maintained, when there was an important body like the London County Council, which had a large revenue and taxpayers who were an unlimited quantity, there was no need for helping London from the Imperial funds. London was not regarded as "necessitous" in regard to another Bill, and if so it was not necessitous in regard to its public parks. It was not a question of the amount of the expenditure, but of who was to bear it. It might be said, "What is the use of protesting. The Government will get the Vote." But continually protesting, ultimately brought about reforms, and he would continue to protest against items being placed in the Estimates which, in the case of the provinces, were paid for by the localities themselves.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not agree with the hon. Member, who desired either to abolish Hyde Park cr to remove it to Edinburgh. [*Laughter and cries of* "No!"] It was not Hyde Park that had made London, but London that had made Hyde Park. Situated where it was, in the centre of the greatest city in the world, it indirectly produced considerable advantages to the rest of the Kingdom, including Scotland. No one would come to these islands to see the Botanic Gardens at Edinburgh, but when they came to see the sights of London they were very likely to go on to Edinburgh, and spend a large sum of money there. [*Laughter.*] That was how it worked out. So that, even from the Scotchman's point of view, Hyde Park was a national institution, and ought to be kept up at the national expense. He was glad the hon. Member did not extend his animosity to Kew. There was a Vote for £740 for the Botanic Gardens at Edinburgh. That was enough to keep the whole of Scotland in greenstuff for a year. [*Laughter.*] He would be glad to find Scotchmen coming to Kew, but this £740 were paid to encourage their patriotic desire to remain in their own country. With regard to Hyde Park, the state of the Ride caused many serious accidents. An easy remedy would be to extend the Ride through Kensington Gardens. No one ever used the Avenue there, and this would be the means of extending the Ride two or three miles. It would interfere with no one. Years ago people were allowed to ride through Kensington Gardens northwards. Why the privilege was stopped he did not know. But in view of the increased influx of Scotchmen and other foreigners—[*laughter*]—into London it was desirable to add to the amenities and the safety of those who went down to the Row on horses. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. F. G. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) sad he desired to confirm what had been said as to the serious accidents that happened through the state of the Ride in Hyde Park. They might be obviated if sand were thrown on the stone pitchings, on which accidents occurred.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER thought that there would probably be more accidents if the ride were extended as suggested by the hon. Member for Lynn Regis. Many of the people who rode in the Park were not fully masters of their horses, and for these people to be galloping across the roadway would be dangerous. The great majority of the riders in Rotten Row nowadays were not sufficiently ornamental to attract foreigners to London, and he did not think the extension of their privileges would either increase the amenities of London or of Hyde Park.

Sir HENRY HOWORTH said it had been proposed that Kew Gardens should be opened during the forenoon, instead of as now at twelve o'clock, until nightfall. Under pressure from residents in the neighbourhood, it was proposed to open the gardens earlier. He was informed by those who had charge of the Gardens that this would involve great difficulties and expense. The Gardens contained a large number of stoves and greenhouses, and if the public were admitted earlier than at present, it must be under vigilant custody, or every kind of mischief would be done. The greenhouses could not be opened before noon without the attendance of a number of gardeners and others, who were already considerably overworked. Up to noon, the persons chiefly attracted to the gardens were children and nursemaids, who no doubt benefited by the air, but were most dangerous in gardens and greenhouses unless there was proper custody. There was an enormous amount of scientific work done in the Gardens, apart from their being a "show place." In the Gardens and Museum there was a continual influx of scientific men for the purpose of serious study, and it was felt that they must have the use of the Gardens in the early part of the day. The privileges already extended to the public at Kew were ample and most generous.

Mr. WEIR pointed out that there had been an increase in this Vote so far as England was concerned, but the Botanic Gardens at Edinburgh, instead of receiving a larger sum, had actually received £20 less than they did last year. As to the money which was received from persons who had the privilege of letting chairs and selling newspapers in the parks, he should like to know whether tenders were invited for this privilege, or whether it was accorded to the same individual year after year—in other words, whether it was a job? He considered that tenders should always be invited, and that the lettings should prove a source of income. He thought the London County Council should have charge of the parks, and that the rich people of London should pay for their own parks. Poor Scotland, which was already taxed enormously by this country, ought not to be charged anything on this head.

*Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) called attention to the library at the Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, which, he said, was still in an elementary condition. The library at Kew was an excellent botanical library, and there were possibly three or four other libraries in London which were all equally perfect. The one in Edinburgh, however, was not sufficiently perfect for the educational requirements of those who attended the courses of lectures at the Royal Botanical Gardens. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, when he was next at Edinburgh, would give some attention to the matter. They were very grateful to him for what he had already done in the way of the extension of buildings at the Gardens, which had been put in a much more satisfactory condition than they had been in hitherto. Of late years the courses of lectures had been much more important both to gardeners and foresters, and the want of a properly equipped library had therefore been very much felt. There was one other point to which he should like to draw attention. He hoped the buildings in connection with Linlithgow Palace would receive the right hon. Gentleman's attention. There had been some repairs carried out which were hardly an ornament to the building. Some of the floors had given way; they had been put up again in part, and some of them had been protected with a layer of pink cement. That was certainly out of keeping with the whole of the buildings. They were very beautiful pattern floors, but whether these remained or had been destroyed, it was quite impossible to tell, because, instead of the stones and tiles they had a layer of this pink cement round the two sides of the main courtyard. Wholly apart from the question of re-roofing the remains of Linlithgow Palace, they ought to have some assurance that the work of repair would be carried on with some regard to the character of the building, and that where such acts of vandalism had been perpetrated as had been the case with these floors from time to time, these errors might be repaired. They all took a great interest in this building, which was perhaps the most beautiful of all of these ancient palaces which remained in Scotland, and care should be taken that it was not lightly interfered with.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) noticed that the expenditure on the Royal Parks had diminished by about £6,000 in the up-keep, which included a great number of parks, in which a vast number of people derived a deal of enjoyment. He should like to hear some defence as to the reduction of the cost, as he thought a great deal more might be done in the London parks than was done at present to increase the pleasure of the people who visited them. There were some works going on at Kensington Gardens in connection with the kiosk there. He saw under the head of "new works" only £50, which obviously would not cover the expenditure that had taken place. Was some private contractor the person to whom the kiosk was let, carrying out the works, and if so, under what sort of arrangement? With regard to Hyde Park there was an expenditure of £1,150, but it did not appear to him to cover the increase which the right hon. Gentleman told them about last year. The kiosk which he mentioned, for instance, had not been put up, and they would like to know if he had changed his mind about it? He further desired to know whether a cinder path might not be made for cyclists in either of these parks and thus greatly add to the pleasures of a large number of people.

*Mr. CHAS. McLAREN (Leicester, Bosworth) on the question of cycling in the parks, asked the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether he could not hold out some hope of greater facilities being given. He did not go so far as to say that a cinder path was wanted, but it would be an advantage if some alley could be laid out or devoted exclusively to cyclists. He could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman, who had shown a great deal of sympathy for the claims of cyclists, might distinguish his period of office by further reforms. In any other capital than London the Mall in St. James's Park would be a pleasant resort, instead of being a more or less disagreeable wilderness. There were four broad alleys, one for vehicular traffic; another, asphalted, was used by pedestrians, and two were deserted. Of these cyclists might be allowed to use one; the gravel was well suited for the purpose. There was a special Ride for Members provided in Birdcage Walk, but in these days more Members used the cycle than rode on horseback, and they had an equal claim for accommodation. In Hyde Park cyclists confined themselves largely to one road on the other side of the Serpentine, and it was very unfair to allow that road to be blocked by carriages and horses. The cycle riding in Hyde Park was one of the prettiest sights in London, and people were attracted by it in large numbers. Many ladies rode cycles there, and as people went to see the Row so they went to see the cycles, and some consideration should be shown to ladies who provided this interest for the public. The right hon. Gentleman had made statements with the object of discouraging people from using the road for driving, but these statements were not read by the coachmen who took their families there for an airing. Something more might be done, and if the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to do something for them, his efforts would be much appreciated by the cycling world of London.

MR. CALDWELL repeated a question he had formerly put to the late Commissioner of Works, in reference to the refreshment kiosk at Kew. The difficulty was in getting a reasonable tariff for the refreshment supplied. Would the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of erecting buildings and letting them for a reasonable term of, say, three years to contractors, keeping some control or attaching some condition to the scale of charges? He made this suggestion in the interest of the many poor visitors to the gardens.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said the hon. Member for Lanark in his first speech took up the financial relations argument, but he trusted it would not be necessary to answer that argument on every Vote. These Royal Parks were maintained at the Imperial charge, and he felt sure there was no desire to see them otherwise than so maintained in a manner worthy of the metropolis of this great country. ["Hear, hear!"] One hon. Member remarked on the cost being too great, but another said he thought that not enough was spent for this purpose. For his own part there was no limit to the amount he would like to spend on the parks, but he was held in check by the Treasury. He must cut his coat according to his cloth, his great ambition being to make the money go as far as possible in rendering the parks more beautiful and enjoyable for the public. He had been asked a question about the Row. As to the extension of the Row round Kensington Gardens, although that might be much desired by the riding public, it would not meet with general acceptance. ["Hear, hear!"] After all, it was but a small section of the population that had the privilege of indulging in horse exercise in the morning. Such an extension would not be popular, and it would be costly. The money could be devoted to better use in connection with the parks. As to the crossing at the top of the Row he had anticipated the wishes of his hon. Friend; he had given directions that the stone crossing should be first chipped and kept sanded, so that horses would be less likely to slip. Upon the Question of opening Kew Gardens earlier in the day he had made careful inquiry, with every desire to open the Gardens as much as possible for the benefit of the public. But he had first to consider that the *raison d'etre* of the gardens was scientific; they were the centre of botanical research for the whole country. This was the chief justification for the large expenditure upon Kew Gardens. Though residents complained of having to wait until noon, yet they were much more fortunately placed than the inhabitants of other London suburbs, for nowhere was there so much open space near London as in the neighbourhood of Kew and Richmond. Kew Gardens must be recognised as a scientific institution, and there was a general agreement among scientific men that the contention of the director was perfectly reasonable that there would be great difficulty in the way of students and in carrying on the classes if the public generally were admitted. He had heard from Professor Balfour, at Edinburgh, where the gardens were opened earlier, that though he did not wish to go back from the arrangement, he experienced great difficulty in conducting his classes because of the large number of visitors. Therefore, he hoped that gentlemen who lived in the neighbourhood of Kew would be moderate in their demands, and would recognise the value of the gardens for purposes other than the exercise of their children in the morning. The hon. Member for Islington had asked as to the works at the kiosk in Kensington Gardens. They consisted merely of putting a kiosk into better condition, and carrying out some drainage—quite a small matter under the head of general repairs. With regard to the proposed new kiosk in Hyde Park, he admitted that he had not carried out the undertaking he gave, when, with the general approval of the Committee, he took the money for the purpose last year. He had been anxious to have a proper kiosk erected, but he had not been able to arrange with the Ranger a satisfactory site near the band stand. He hoped, however, to make a satisfactory arrangement at a later period. With regard to bicycles in the park, he ventured to differ from the hon. Member for Bosworth as to the picturesque nature of bicycles or bicycle riders. [*Laughter.*] He did not think any extension in the direction of cinder paths or asphalte paths would tend to beautify the park, and he did not know that those who rode bicycles would lend any additional attraction to the park. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] He had taken some interest in this matter, and had laid down what he thought were reasonable regulations for the admission of bicyclists. It seemed to be thought that they were limited to one road. As a matter of fact, they were allowed to go on any of the roads in the park from the moment it was open till 12 o'clock. The cyclists' original request was that they should be allowed to use the roads in the park up to 10 o'clock in the morning. Shortly after that permission had been given the Ranger extended it, to meet their views, up to any hour in the forenoon that the First Commissioner liked to adopt. He (the First Commissioner) named the hour of 12, and he was bound to say that he had not found sufficient support to justify him in again approaching the Ranger and asking him to extend the hours further. He certainly did not feel inclined to take into his consideration at all any question of making cinder or asphalte paths in the park for this purpose. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member also suggested that bicycles should be allowed on one of the tracks in the Mall. That opened up rather a larger question than the hon. Member had in his mind. At the present moment, he believed he was right in saying the law of the land was that no bicycle might go on a footway. These tracks in the Mall were footways, except that the Commissioner of Police might turn carriages down them on the occasion of a Drawing Room, and he did not think it would be worth departing from the law of the land in order to enable bicyclists to ride down them. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to the question which the hon. Member opposite asked him about Linlithgow, he ventured to think that the improvements, which were begun in the time of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, were of a very important character. He was not prepared to admit the terms of reproach which the hon. Member applied to them. A great deal of attention had been paid to Linlithgow both by the right hon. Gentleman opposite and by himself, and they had taken money in the last few years for the purpose. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman in his appreciation of one of the most magnificent buildings they had in Scotland, and it certainly would be his endeavour to keep it, as far as he could, in the best possible repair. It was a magnificent ruin in its present state, and he ventured to think it would be a very great mistake to attempt any modern restoration. If they did they would probably have a similar result as they had some years ago at Holyrood, where, in an endeavour to put a new roof on the old walls, they came down altogether. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark asked him about the refreshment kiosk at Kew. He had not heard recently of any complaint of the kind. He had himself constantly visited Kew, and had enjoyed the advantage of the kiosk. If the hon. Gentleman wished to see how excellent the food was and how cheap, he would recommend that he should spend some of his Easter holidays in visiting Kew and testing the quality of its refreshments. [*Laughter.*] In answer to the hon. Member for Lynn Regis, he had to say that the Ranger of Hyde Park, who received no pay whatever for being Ranger, had no power with regard to the general management of the landscape gardens, though he maintained a nominal control. The Bailiff of the Parks had a salary, and he (Colonel Wheatley) was one of the best servants whom the State had at the present moment, and it was largely to his energy, ability and skill that they owed the very great improvements which they had seen in the park. He was entirely under the control of the First Commissioner of Works, and not under the control of the Ranger. In answer to the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, he had to say that when he came into office he found that no charge had been made for the right of letting chairs in Hyde Park. He at once gave instructions that they should seek for a more satisfactory arrangement, and the result was that he obtained from the persons who had the privilege the sum of £1,000 a year. ["Hear, hear!"] With that money he had been able to pay the bands, which performed, he thought, to the satisfaction of everyone in the Park.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he had heard with sincere regret the reply the right hon. Gentleman had made with regard to the opening of Kew Gardens. He would like to put before him another view of this matter, and he hoped he should have the support of the Colonial Secretary. They were likely to have this year what was termed a foregathering of English-speaking people from all parts of the world, and he asked that Kew Gardens should be opened, if for this year only, earlier in the day than they were now, so as to prevent parties of Colonial visitors, Americans, Frenchmen, and Germans, who went down to Kew early in the morning, being obliged either to kick their heels at the riverside until the gardens opened at 12 o'clock, or to leave without the opportunity of seeing the gardens at all. He believed that was an injustice to people who came to London, and that the scientific training and education could be carried on without interfering with the admission of such visitors. There was no reason why the gardens should not be opened at 10 o'clock, and the gatekeeper might have some discretionary power as to the admission of people. He did not believe what the professors said with regard to the teaching of their classes if the public were admitted. If artistic education could be carried on as it was in the museums under these circumstances, he saw no reason why it could not be done at Kew Gardens. It was absurd to suppose that, owing to pure cussedness on the part of the permanent officials, who wished that the students should have privacy, this magnificent public institution should be closed until 12 o'clock in the day.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) said the hon. Gentleman had appealed to him, as Colonial Secretary, to support him in his attack on the administration of Kew Gardens.

Mr. BURNS said that, on the contrary, he asked the Colonial Secretary to support him in his request that Kew Gardens should be opened earlier in the day, so that colonial visitors, together with Americans and others, should not suffer inconvenience through the gardens being opened so late.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN did not see the object of the interruption. The hon. Gentleman sat down having just appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to protest against the pigheadedness of those who were administering Kew Gardens.

Mr. J. BURNS: Pure cussedness.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Pure cussedness! That was, perhaps, worse. [*A laugh.*] Cussedness implied some control, whereas a man might be born pigheaded. [*Renewed laughter.*] But he rose, in answer to the hon. Gentleman's appeal to join him in his attack upon the administration of Kew Gardens. The hon. Gentleman had appealed to him as Colonial Secretary only, but he might have appealed to him as a very enthusiastic horticulturist, for he could certainly say that to him gardening was even a greater delight than politics themselves. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member had failed to realise the peculiar position in which Kew Gardens stood; he treated them as if they existed for the benefit of the inhabitants of Kew. That was not the proper merit or claim the gardens had upon the support of the Committee, but it was as a great scientific establishment. We were very justly proud of the gardens. He had seen almost every botanical garden in Europe, and he thought he was right in saying there was nothing in the whole of Europe which could hold the candle to Kew. [" Hear, hear ! "] He was not speaking as to the decoration of the gardens, but as to their scientific value. [" Hear, hear ! "] The hon. Gentleman said that French and German people had to wait outside the gates, having got there before the time of opening; and he complained of the cussedness of officials because they did not open the gates before the proper time. That was really a little too absurd. If one went at 11 o'clock to an institution in France which opened at 12 o'clock, that was his pigheadedness, and not the pigheadedness of the officials who kept the doors closed. [*Laughter.*] There was nothing peculiar in Kew Gardens opening at 12 o'clock. A great number of foreign institutions opened at 12 o'clock, and some did not open until late in the afternoon. It was, of course, the business of Frenchmen and Germans to be at Kew Gardens at the proper time and not before. [*A laugh.*] But the point was that if they opened the gardens at the time his hon. Friend desired they should be opened they would most materially interfere with their value as a scientific institution—[" hear, hear ! "]—and they would interfere with the work of the officials. In his capacity as Colonial Secretary he was continually applying to Kew in reference to the cultivation of all kinds of plants, and he did not hesitate to say that some of the great improvements made in the Mauritius and some of the West Indian Islands were due almost entirely to the advice and assistance received from the Kew officials—[" hear, hear ! "]—the gentlemen whom the hon. Member had described as pigheaded or cussed. It was not fair to attack public servants who were really performing useful duty, and it was not fair to throw on them, for the benefit of children and nurserymaids and Frenchmen and Germans, duties which would depreciate from their value as advisers of the colonial and other officers of the Government, who might from time to time have occasion to apply for their services. He thought that on consideration the Committee would see that the public were sufficiently provided for when the gardens were opened, as now, every weekday at 12 o'clock and on Sunday afternoon, which was, after all, the most popular time, and when Kew was visited by the largest number of people. [" Hear, hear ! "]

MR. LOUGH moved to reduce the Vote by £110. He said the hon. Member for Battersea did not get much sympathy from the Colonial Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman might surely have dealt more kindly with the hon. Gentleman. Certainly if the Estimates were to be discussed in the spirit which the right hon. Gentleman had displayed, there would not be the same progress with them in the future as there had been in the past. But he rose particularly to refer to the treatment the First Commissioner of Works had received from the Ranger of Hyde Park in respect to the kiosk it had been decided to erect there. Last year they voted money for the kiosk, but now they were told the First Commissioner of Works could not carry out his wishes because of the action of the Ranger of the park, for whom, as Ranger of Richmond Park, a sum was taken in this Vote. The erection of the kiosk was prevented because the Ranger would not give the site the First Commissioner desired to have. The Committee ought, he thought, to protest against the interference of the Ranger in the matter, and as a means of making a protest he moved to reduce the Vote by £110.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that in all the negotiations he had had with the Ranger for two years he had found his Royal Highness anxious to meet his wishes and those of the public. He did not desire the House to understand that there were any difficulties placed in his way except as to a particular site.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said a year was a long time for coming to an arrangement as to a site in a restricted area. There were many possible sites, and he should like to know whether there was any prospect of an arrangement being arrived at? If there was none, then he thought the House should know. He thought they might ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there was a prospect of an early agreement?

Mr. BURNS joined in the point raised by the Member for Islington. The public were in favour of this kiosk; there was, in fact, only one person who objected to it, and he thought if they applied sufficient pressure they could induce every Ranger to climb down easily, and sometimes quickly. It should not take more than three months to build the kiosk; and he instanced a building operation in Battersea Park by the County Council as an example to the right hon. Gentleman. The fact was, they had no control over some of the expenditure on Royal Parks and Gardens.

Mr. WARNER did not want to see any additional buildings in Hyde Park, and sincerely hoped they would be kept out. He thought that if any kiosk was put up it would take away from the rural aspect of the park. He thought that public opinion would back up the Ranger.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said this kiosk was for the comfort of thousands who could there get refreshments and shelter, and he considered that it would add considerably to the attractions of the park.

Mr. CALDWELL said a very important question was here involved. Did the Ranger manage the park, or the House of Commons, which provided all the money for the maintenance of the parks? He knew of no constitutional reason why the Ranger should arrogate to himself a power greater than that of the House of Commons in dealing with the Royal Parks. In this action of the Committee there was no reflection cast on the First Commissioner, but they wished to give expression to their feelings on the matter.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 52; Noes, 144.—(Division List, No. 169.)

Mr. J. BURNS said that, notwithstanding the adverse criticism which his suggestion had met with in a very high quarter, he again rose to press it upon the First Commissioner of Works. In doing so he would say that a taste for horticulture and a love of orchids did not beget either the scientific or an impartial mind on small matters of administration. Certainly it did not beget a knowledge of the facts with regard to Kew Gardens. His anxiety was not for the residents around Kew Gardens, but for the visitors, who at present were prevented from using them either for pleasure or for scientific purposes before twelve o'clock. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken with much cocksureness about what took place in Continental capitals; but if he made inquiry he would find that similar gardens and institutions in Berlin, Vienna and Paris were open earlier than twelve, or even ten, o'clock in the day. It was ridiculous to say that earlier opening would necessitate a double staff. The men started work at six or seven o'clock in the morning, and most of the staff was at work between the hours of eight and eleven o'clock. London, the hon. Member proceeded, was swarming with polytechnics, where large numbers of young men and young women attended classes for botany and kindred subjects. Very frequently it happened that the only time teachers could take their students to the gardens was between ten and twelve o'clock in the morning; and under this antiquated rule they would be refused access. By admitting these students they would be carrying out the real object of Kew Gardens as a scientific institution. There was no reason why it should not be done. He denied that he had attacked the permanent officials. They were paid to do their work, and he maintained the right of the House to criticise the administration of any public institution on which public money was spent. He would not follow the Colonial Secretary either in the bad taste or in the ungentlemanly temper which he displayed.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: I do not think that is a proper expression to use.

Mr. BURNS: Well, I will not use it. When an hon. Member made suggestions which were worthy of consideration, he ought not to be told that he was making attacks on public officials.

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.) said that his hon. Friend was fully justified in bringing this point before the notice of the Committee. It was desirable to extend the privilege of visiting Kew Gardens to as many people as possible; but the question was not so simple as his hon. Friend supposed. Of course, sometimes, when pressure of this kind was brought to bear on public offices, a way was found to meet the suggestions that were made. But as to this matter, he had gone into it fully when he was First Commissioner of Works, and he found that when the Gardens were opened on Bank Holidays at an earlier hour than twelve, comparatively few people availed themselves of the privilege. He did not think that sufficient advantage would result from this arrangement to balance the extra cost which would be involved. But it might be possible to give more facilities to societies and students to visit the Gardens under special permission. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that there could be no doubt that arrangements might be made in that direction. He had made special inquiries, and found that anyone wishing to visit the Gardens early for scientific purposes was never refused admision. If institutions, such as the hon. Member for Battersea had mentioned, wished for the purposes of study to visit the Gardens, he was sure that they would be admitted, and more than that, he would take care that they should be admitted. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. BURNS said that he was much obliged for the courteous and valuable concession which the right hon. Gentleman had made.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: It is not a concession, because the privilege is granted already.

Mr. BURNS said that there were 30 or 40 polytechnics and similar institutions from which classes, under charge of teachers, would like to visit the Gardens, sometimes on Wednesday mornings, but generally on Saturday mornings. As the London School Board gave marks both to teachers and scholars for visiting public institutions in classes, he hoped that such classes would be given the same privilege as the polytechnic classes. If the Gardens could be opened to them at 10, a great convenience would be accorded, and the work of the gardeners would not be interfered with.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said that he had consistently spoken for 11 years on this question, and had succeeded in obtaining certain advantages for the English people. The First Commissioner tried to meet every suggestion in a kind spirit, and he wished, for the sake of the country, that all Government Departments were conducted in the same spirit. It was always easy to approach the First Commissioner of Works. The refreshment kiosk at Kew—which Lord Rathmore, when First Commissioner had described as "Tanner's kiosk"—did not give sufficient accommodation to the people. He had seen many turned away; and, furthermore, the waiters were all Germans. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to see that the tea kiosk in the Gardens was enlarged; and if he could not get all Irish waiters, to put on a few English, and, at all events, to see that they were not all Germans.

Mr. CALDWELL said that the Auditor General in his last Report called attention to the fact that no inventory of tools was kept in the various parks; and that no uniform plan was kept for checking and issuing the return of implements. He thought those matters should be attended to.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS thought there was a system of satisfactory inventories kept, but he would look into the matter himself.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

5. Motion made, and Question proposed,—

> "That a sum, not exceeding £23,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Houses of Parliament Building."

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES objected to the tiles of the Lobby and Central Hall. In the first place they were of a bilious yellow colour, which was enough to drive an hysterical man to violence, and in the next place they were so extremely slippery that it was dangerous to walk upon them. [*Laughter.*] In fact, he often thought they must have been put down by the junior Members of the Government who were desirous of creating vacancies in the Cabinet. [*Laughter.*] He suggested that stone pavements should be substituted for the tiles.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) was glad to notice that a beginning was about to be made to fill up the three vacant panels in the Central Hall with mosaics, in harmony with the fourth panel of St. George. He wished to know whether there were any cartoons or paintings in the possession of the Office of Works from which mosaics could be constructed for those panels? He understood that Sir Edward Poynter, the President of the Royal Academy, who prepared the design of St. George, had provided another design, and that two others had been provided by Mr. Albert Moore. He also hoped that attention would continue to be paid to the frescoes in the Houses. The late Commissioner of Works, carrying out another old suggestion of his, had called in the highest authority in the world on the subject of frescoes, Professor Church, who very handsomely agreed to gratuitously look after the frescoes, and everyone who recollected what the condition of the pictures was before the Professor took them in hand must admit that they had been most successfully renovated. Professor Church presented a Report, in which he described his method of work, and said he was prepared, if invited, to continue his benevolent care of the pictures. The House and the country, therefore, owed a debt of gratitude to Professor Church. He should like to know whether it was intended to put up in the Central Hall another statue to Mr. Bright. Mr. Gilbert's statue was a great artistic work, but it was not an adequate representation of Mr. Bright as he was known in the House; and it would be a pity if there was to be no statue of that great Statesman at Westminster.

Mr. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock) suggested that Members should have one room for reading or writing in which some other than the electric light was used.

Mr. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) explained the circumstances under which the panels in the central hall had remained empty so long. When first the arrangement was made by which certain panels were filled, it was decided they should all be filled in the same way, with glass mosaic work. The then Chief Commissioner of Works was interested in a manufactory at Venice where these mosaics were made, and it was therefore assumed that he had some pecuniary interest in the matter, but the fact was he simply took a great interest in art, and he really had no monetary interest in it at all, and was simply spending money there with a view to art. They were only carrying out the original intention if now they proceeded to fill up these panels. He rose more particularly, however, to plead the cause of the smokers. The Chief Commissioner had done all he could to help them, but his efforts so far had not been very successful. Most unquestionably the present smoking room was very inadequate as regarded accommodation, and the atmosphere was not precisely what could be wished for in a smoking room. It had been suggested that the quadrangle should be covered over and utilised for the purpose. This, however, was a proposal which would always be resisted by the Government Whips, because if hon. Members managed to slip down on the plea that they were going to the smoking room, in all probability they would forget the duty they owed to their country and Party, and slip out of the House entirely. He pleaded for better accommodation for the smokers. He believed the business of the House would hardly be carried on if it was not for the smoking room. They would have everybody crowding the Chamber, and, as Satan found some work for idle hands to do, so also he found some work for idle mouths to do. They would double the talking if they had not a smoking room. [*Laughter.*] Then the temper and irritation would also be doubled if it were not for the soothing, calming effect of nicotine on the Members. If he was horrified by something said on the other side his first impulse was to protest, but what did he do? He went to the smoking room, lit a cigarette, and came back perfectly calm.

Sir H. HOWORTH wished to say a word on behalf of another class, namely, the tea drinkers, who ought to have a room better suited to their needs, providing larger accommodation. If possible, they should also secure better accommodation for newspaper readers. In both those respects the present accommodation was small and inadequate.

Mr. LOUGH complained of the bad ventilation of some of the large committee rooms, and the stifling atmosphere in them, and asked why they should not all be ventilated by having a fan erected? He hoped the telegraphic communication of the speakers in the House would be extended to all the rooms. One item he strongly protested against, and that was the sum of £200 for extending the bookcases along the library corridor. These bookcases were the greatest disfigurement that existed in the House. They should be all removed, and their places occupied by pretty statues or pictures.

MR. BURNS called attention to the expenditure of £750 for panel decoration in the central Lobby, and asked whether the other three panels were to be in keeping with the panel already completed? If the panels were to be completed in mosaic, he suggested that the example of the method of decoration followed in St. Paul's Cathedral ought to be followed, instead of the flat Italian mosaic. He also appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to make an effort to keep together the small school of English mosaic craftsmen who had been employed at St. Paul's Cathedral. The work there had been carried out by a City firm, and by English designers and workmen, in a very creditable way, and he hoped these workmen would have an opportunity of showing their skill in the completion of the three panels in the outside Lobby.

DR. TANNER called attention to the completion of the decoration of panels, the construction of a glass awning outside the Speaker's house, and the formation of a new doorway to the terrace. He complained that the terrace was made a kind of show place, where a large number of ladies walked up and down blocking the gangways to the free egress and ingress of Members. The terrace, indeed, was a place for afternoon tea, a society parade, instead of being a place where hon. Members could take a small outing.

MR. WEIR complained of the ventilation of the House, and described the atmosphere in the Chamber as poisonous. Sewer air permeated the Chamber and the Committee Rooms, the Reporters' Gallery, and the Ladies' Gallery. He also wanted to know whether the House was supplied with water, especially the dining room, from the artesian well, or whether it was a mixture of Thames water and artesian water. He personally preferred good water to whisky.

DR. FARQUHARSON protested against the strictures that had been passed on the ventilation of the House, which was probably the best ventilated Chamber in the world. No sewer gas could penetrate into it, and the building was now, he believed, absolutely free from any pernicious ingredient.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS called attention to the question of warming the House when there were all-night sittings. During very late sittings, when human vitality was at its lowest, the heating apparatus invariably ceased to act, with the result that the House became quite cold. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would pay special attention to the desirability of warming the House during late sittings. In some parts of the House there was, perhaps, more than adequate ventilation, for he had heard several Members complain that they had suffered from something like rheumatism in the feet in consequence of the excessive ventilation under the seats. But as far as the freshness of air was concerned, he doubted whether any better ventilated building could be found. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the extension of the telegraph indicator to the dining-room and library. He noticed that there was an item of £1,000 for furnishing the residence of the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod. Was it customary to refurnish the residence of that official, or had a new residence been assigned to the present holder of the office? There was another matter requiring attention, now that the South African Committee was sitting. There had been some peculiar proceedings, and some witnesses had actually refused to answer questions put to them. If it should become the duty of the Committee, he presumed that they would take notice of contumacy of that kind. In these circumstances the apartment in the Clock Tower would be called into requisition, and he wished to be told whether that apartment was in readiness for the reception of gentlemen who were apparently determined to go there? Was the room quite near the clock?

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: The hon. Member is misinformed. It is only Members of the House who are committed to the Clock Tower. [*A laugh.*]

MR. LEWIS hoped the time was far distant when a Member of the House might have to go there, and was glad to learn that a humbler residence was assigned to persons who refused to answer the questions of a Committee.

MR. CALDWELL complained that when the House of Lords was in vacation, Members of the House of Commons who wished to show the Peers' Chamber to their friends were prevented from doing so. He had himself experienced this, and when he asked for an explanation was told that he and his friends could not be shown the chambers of the Upper House because they were not in charge of the First Commissioner of Works. He thought this was carrying matters rather far. It was absurd that visitors who were accompanied by Members of the House of Commons should not be allowed to see the magnificent Chamber where the Peers assembled. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to arrange for the removal of this unreasonable restriction.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) observed that the hon. Member for the Flint Boroughs appeared to anticipate that late sittings would become the normal state of things. For his part, he trusted that they would be rare. In connection with the subject of ventilation which had been raised, he wished to say that personally he often suffered from too great an abundance of air, especially in the Division Lobbies and Library, in the summer months. During the summer season it was almost impossible to find any part of the House that was free from draughts in certain states of the weather. Fresh air was introduced in a line with the person, and windows were constantly being opened, without regard to the quarter whence the wind blew, or to the temperature. He hoped that something would be done to remedy the existing state of things.

Dr. TANNER referred to the possibility of filtering fog, if necessary, through masses of cotton wool. As regarded ventilation, the floor of the House had been kept perfectly clear, so that the draught might come up; but he thought it was desirable for hon. Members to wipe their boots before walking up the floor of the House, lest particles of dirt should be carried by the draught into the atmosphere they breathed.

Mr. J. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would take care that the furniture and articles of that sort which were purchased should be as far as possible of British manufacture?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said with regard to the item for the panels in the central Lobby, there was a misprint in the Estimates. The sum asked for was not "for the completion," but "towards the completion" of the decoration. He was afraid it would not be possible to complete those panels for the sum of money on the Estimates—namely, £750. As to the designs, there were in the South Kensington Museum, on loan from the Office of Works, two water-colour designs of the late Mr. Albert Moore for two of the panels of the central hall, and there was also a sketch which Sir Edward Poynter had prepared. They had not got very far with the matter yet, but it was his intention to send for the designs of Mr. Albert Moore, and if this money were voted they would consider how far they could utilise these designs and that of Sir Edward Poynter. He was entirely in sympathy with the hon. Member for Battersea with regard to the class of work which had been done in St. Paul's Cathedral. He had seen it on several occasions, and watched it carefully, with a view to seeing how far it was applicable to the building. He ventured to say that the class of work might be very well adopted in that House, and he proposed to give his attention in that direction. ["Hear, hear!"] The item of £100 for repairing frescoes, to which the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire had called attention, was a sum which ought to have been spent last year in restoring certain frescoes which Professor Church had taken in hand. He believed it was the fact that this work could not be carried out in certain conditions of the atmosphere, and, consequently, it had had to be postponed. He would like to express the great obligation which the Government were under to Professor Church for the profound skill he had shown in doing this very practical work, and for placing his services gratuitously at their disposal. With regard to the question of the Bright statue, nothing, so far as he knew, had been done further in the matter. The House would remember that the statue which was placed in the Central Hall last year was placed there by a Committee, but it was found that the statue was so out of keeping with the general desire of the House that, after a good deal of negotiation, it was removed. No approach had officially been made to him to put another statue in its place, but he had no objections—in fact, he should be glad to find accommodation in the building for a representation of Mr. Bright. ["Hear, hear!"] In future, however, some steps ought to be taken to see these works of art before they pledged themselves to admit them within their portals. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Northampton had raised the question, very familiar to most of them, of the want of smoking-room accommodation. He was perfectly ready to admit that it was a well-founded complaint, as the smoking tendencies among Members were very much greater, no doubt, than they were in days gone by. In addition to that they wanted more tea-room and newspaper-room accommodation, but he did not quite see how they could get it. He had made the suggestion last year that one of the court-yards should be roofed in, and extra accommodation provided in that way, but he admitted that the suggestion was open to objections. He did not think the objections were very serious, however, but he thought they could not go in for so large a proposal without much more consideration. He was now in correspondence with the officials of the other House in regard to some small accommodation which had become vacant through the resignation of the late librarian, and it might be possible by this means to provide another room, though he could not pledge himself to that as yet. In regard to the question of bookcases in the corridor, he pointed out that a great deal of extra space for books was required. The hon. Member for Cork criticised the cost of the awning over the entrance to the Speaker's house. But the awning was an improvement, desired not only by the Speaker, but by very many of his guests at dinners and levées. He himself was not aware that the estimate was excessive, or compared unfavourably with what the hon. Member said was the cost of the previous awning. During the Easter recess every effort would be made by temporary expedients to improve the ventilation of the Committee rooms. During the autumn recess of 1895-96 the ventilation of the House itself was fully considered. It was found that, in certain respects, it needed improvement, and arrangements were made which rendered it impossible for any foul air to enter the House. He hoped there would be no all-night sittings this Session, but whenever there was an all-night sitting, directions had been given that the House should be properly heated in the early hours of the morning, when one's vitality was always lowest. As to the admission of strangers to the terrace, he had suggested, beside an alteration in the rules as to the number of ladies each Member might introduce, that ladies should be asked to go direct to the terrace by the carriage entrance, or else through the outer Lobby, that the central Lobby and central staircase might not be blocked, as had often been the case when there were large numbers of visitors on busy nights. He would endeavour to ascertain the rules as to the admission of visitors to the House of Lords during the recess, and to obtain for the hon. Member for Hackney the information he desired.

After the usual interval, the Chair was taken by Mr. Grant Lawson.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said that he was rather disappointed that the right hon. Gentleman could not give them a little more encouragement with regard to a statue of Mr. John Bright. He had seen it stated that the family of Mr. Bright were prepared to give a statue or a bust, and he hoped it might be possible to utilise the offer in a proper way. He thought it would be a great satisfaction if they could have some memorial of Mr. Bright in that House. There was no party feeling in the matter, for that great statesman was appreciated not only on that side of the House, but equally by hon. Gentlemen opposite. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said the hon. Baronet would recognise that this matter did not really rest in his hands. It was not as though the statue which had been removed had been put up by the Government. It was put up by a Committee, but it proved so distasteful to Members generally that, acting as their mouthpiece, he represented to the Committee that the feeling of the House was outraged by having so bad a statue of a statesman whom they wished to honour, and it was withdrawn. ["Hear, hear!"] Since that time no representations had been made to him officially that it was the desire of any section of the public that a statue of Mr. Bright should be placed in the House. He did happen to know privately that the family of Mr. Bright were anxious that a statue of their father should be placed in the House, but he thought the hon. Baronet would recognise that he must have something further to go upon than that before he could give assent on the part of the Government. He had no desire to keep out a representation of so distinguished a statesman.

Dr. TANNER moved "That Item A (New Works, Etc.), be reduced by £150, in respect of the formation of a new door to the Terrace." He would not say one word against the fair sex, but he thought the large number of ladies who were allowed to walk up and down the terrace was making the House unpopular with a certain section.

Mr. CALDWELL said he had a good deal of sympathy with the proposed reduction. In the normal condition of affairs, the present access to the terrace was quite sufficient, but during the last two years there had been an inroad on the terrace not altogether compatible with the position of that House as a Legislative Assembly. What they wanted was to make that building as effective, as efficient, and as comfortable as possible for its purposes as a Legislative Assembly, and not as a restaurant.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS hoped that the First Commissioner of Works would take steps towards the erection of a statue of the late Mr. Bright. He was confident that upon inquiry the right hon. Gentleman would find that hon. Gentlemen in every quarter of the House were just as anxious that there should be some statue of the late statesman placed in the building as they were to get rid of the very inadequate representation of him which was put in the Lobby some time ago. ["Hear, hear!"]

Dr. TANNER could not understand why, in addition to the £1,000 allowed

Mr. Akers-Douglas.

them, the Kitchen Committee should want £350. They had exceptional advantages, and in order to elicit from the Government an account of the expenditure, he moved "That item G (maintenance of refreshment plant, House of Commons), be reduced by £10."

Amendment put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

6. £25,000, to complete the sum for the Admiralty, Extension of Buildings.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS asked what was the cause of the enormous increase between the original and revised Estimate?

*Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee) wished to know whether the extension of the Admiralty buildings was to be in continuation of the same style of architecture as prevailed at present? He did not know the technical name of that architecture, but thought it was altogether unworthy of public buildings intended for Government offices of a permanent character. They had one example of it in New Scotland Yard. He thought brick was a very good material in some places—when, for example, it was the chief material for the exterior of a building. But it seemed to him that it was altogether incongruous in those buildings which were composed to a considerable extent of stone, and taken altogether were very puny and insignificant, and lacking in anything of an impressive and imposing character. Anyone who travelled through the capitals of Europe must be impressed with the dignity and stateliness of their Government buildings. Capitals very much smaller than this Metropolis—capitals of countries with nothing like the wealth of this country—had buildings which impressed one as being worthy of Royal and Imperial capitals. But this new mongrel style of architecture was, he thought, unworthy of the position in which it was placed, and he had risen to protest against it. He hoped that, in the new block of buildings about to be erected adjacent to the Palace of Westminster, care would be taken that they would be worthy of the position in which they were to be placed. He was not one who sympathised with a cheeseparing policy in regard to the edifices that were intended or ought to last for centuries. Seeing how much this country was now frequented by visitors from foreign states and colonial dependencies, he hoped that edifices would be erected in this Metropolis which would be superior to those in their own capitals. What, he thought, must be obvious to many hon. Members, was that the provincial cities and towns of this country were setting an example to the Metropolis instead of the Metropolis setting an example to them. The town halls in cities such as Glasgow, Leeds and Liverpool, and the one which was about to be opened in a few weeks by Her Majesty in Sheffield, were, with regard to their size, stateliness, grandeur and internal arrangements, far superior to the great majority of modern Government erections in this Metropolis. Instead of going back from the relatively noble style of the Foreign Office to this decadence in the Admiralty Office, he hoped that the First Commissioner of Works, and the heads of the other Government Departments who were interested in the new edifices which would be shortly erected, would endeavour to make them worthy of this great Metropolis. He presumed that these extensions must, for the sake of consistency and congruity, accord with the present buildings, but he thought the style was altogether unworthy of the position they occupied, and he hoped that, so far as future structures were concerned, the example set in the Foreign Office and the Treasury Buildings on the west side of Parliament Street would be followed, and that Parliament Street would be so completed as to make one proud of the buildings therein erected.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that the increased expenditure this year as compared with last year was accounted for by more work. As to the point raised by the hon. Member for Dundee, he could not say that he did not, to a certain extent, agree with him; but he must say that it was most unfair for hon. Members to judge the whole of the new Admiralty building by the one new wing. It was only a portion of a large scheme. They might as well judge Chelsea Hospital buildings by one small wing.

Vote agreed to.

7. £39,000, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS pointed out that the country was still paying for the maintenance of the London Police Courts, as of old. Why should the country maintain the London Courts? Towns like Liverpool and Manchester maintained their own police courts, and why should they be taxed in addition for the London Police Courts? He awaited with some interest the answer which the right hon. Gentleman would give to the House on this question. Were the Government going to take some action in the matter?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he certainly did hope that this item would not have appeared this year, but a Bill had been introduced, and it was on the Paper for Monday next. He was afraid it would not then be reached, but the intention was that the Bill should be proceeded with, and that the cost of these Courts should be transferred in the way suggested.

Mr. CALDWELL said the Police Courts of the country had to be provided out of the rates. [*Cries of* "Agreed!"] Of course, he could understand London Members crying out agreed. They thought they could go to a division, beat those who protested, and that then there would be nothing more said about it. [An hon. Member: "That is the ordinary way."] In the end, however, the protest raised from year to year would lead to a reform. They could get nothing in the House unless they pressed for it. They held that there was no reason why London should be treated in a different manner from the rest of the United Kingdom. They had objected, on the question of financial relations, that such London charges as these were thrown on the Imperial Estimates. They knew nothing about the Bill referred to, and he was entitled to ask the First Commissioner of Works how he proposed to do away with this anomaly? How was he going to remove these sums from the Imperial Estimates? How were they going to provide for these buildings in future, whereby London would be placed in the same position as the rest of the United Kingdom? Nobody knew better than those in charge of the Bill that it was intended to make no difference. It would be a mere transfer to bring about the same result.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that for years he had advocated that this charge should be borne by the locality, and he understood that it was in consequence of what he said in the last Parliament, that the Bill had now been brought in by the Government.

Mr. CALDWELL said he had raised the question in the Parliament before last.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said he noticed that there was an item in the Vote for the acquisition of a site for the new County Court at Birmingham, and he would like to know how far that matter had proceeded, and exactly what the town of Birmingham might expect with reference to the new County Court? He thought the old County Court buildings were the ugliest they had in the town. The only building to compare with it for ugliness was the old Post Office, which was now used as the Revenue Office. He sincerely hoped that, in erecting a new County Court, the Government would take care that the best street in Birmingham was not disfigured by the erection of a building of the same architectural ugliness as the present County Court, and that it would contain accommodation sufficient for many years to come. He hoped when the site was acquired it would be in a good position, and that they would have a handsome building, sufficiently large and capable of extension. If this were done, they would not have these repeated requests for renewing buildings within the space of a quarter of a century.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that the original proposal was to buy a piece of land adjoining the County Court at Birmingham, and on it to build additional offices for the County Court and the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy, who, he believed, was now in hired premises. But unfortunately the land immediately adjoining was recently let by the Corporation, and the present occupier required so much compensation that they were unable to deal with him. They had, therefore, thought it desirable to proceed in another direction. He trusted that, should a building ultimately be erected, it would be worthy of Birmingham, and he would take care that when they came to the question of plans, the authorities of Birmingham would be acquainted with their intentions.

Vote agreed to.

8. £16,000 to complete the sum for Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain.

Mr. LOUGH pointed out that the Vote was decreasing year by year. The policy of the Government seemed to be to pinch and squeeze everything connected with South Kensington to the lowest possible point. He hoped the Committee would have an assurance that steps would be taken as soon as possible to complete the buildings there. A proposal had been made that if the money necessary to provide a proper building for the housing of the valuable collections at South Kensington could not be found at once, it might be raised by loan. The Vote was this year reduced by an amount that would meet the interest on a very substantial part of the sum required. The Government were treating the matter shamefully. Everybody was agreed that this was a most pressing question.

Mr. BARTLEY said that when the question of the shameful condition of South Kensington Museum was raised four or five years ago, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, promised that in the following year he would give a Vote to begin the work of completing the building, but when the time came for the right hon. Gentleman to fulfil his promise, he stated that the public demands on the Exchequer were so great that he could not do it. He noticed that the Government were paying as much as £4,500 a year for the hire of temporary premises in which to place portions of the collection. As money could now be raised by the Exchequer at 2½ per cent., a sum of nearly a quarter of a million could be obtained for the building without any addition to taxation for the £4,500 a year now paid for inferior premises. He thought the Government ought to raise the necessary money in that way, and spread its repayment over a series of years. It certainly was a scandal that the buildings which had been inaugurated by the Prince Consort should be left in such a disgraceful condition in the jubilee year of Her Majesty's reign. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said that for many a long year he had been endeavouring to impress upon Government after Government the necessity for doing justice to the South Kensington Museum. It was greatly to be regretted that a mistaken economy on the part of the Treasury prevented the completion of the building. It was a misfortune to science and art, and a scandal to the administration of the public affairs of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] Noble work had been done in Lancashire and Yorkshire in providing splendid buildings for similar scientific and artistic collections without any appeal to the public purse, and it was to be regretted that the State should be so laggard and niggardly when local communities were so forward and liberal in the cause of technical education. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. BURNS said that the Government had appointed a Committee to inquire not only as to the administration, but the completion of the housing of South Kensington Museum; and he thought that pending the report of that Committee, the Government would be unwise in spending a single sovereign on South Kensington. But he would make one suggestion. South Kensington was paying £4,400 a year for the rent of certain galleries in Exhibition Road previously connected with the Imperial Institute. This charge ought to cease; and it could be put an end to if the Government had the courage to approach the Queen and ask that the Imperial Institute—which had not proved a success for its particular purposes—should, together with these external galleries, be handed over to the South Kensington authorities to accommodate that large collection of objects which were seeking room. The rent which South Kensington paid for the galleries simply kept the Imperial Institute on its legs. He believed that Her Majesty would respond to the petition, and he knew of no better way of celebrating the jubilee than by clearing out all those snobs and "Johnnies" who had not secured the knighthoods and baronetcies which they expected to get out of the Imperial Institute. The extraordinary genius of Sir Somers Vine had not made a success of the Institute, which was the laughing-stock of the West End of London, and the envy of every South Kensington official.

Mr. CALDWELL said that he had no objection to the money being spent on what were national buildings; but he wished to make a claim for Scotland, which received very little under this Vote. Some arrangement might be made to increase the building accommodation of the Edinburgh Museum, so that more loan exhibits might be sent down from the British and South Kensington Museums. It was no longer held that the contents of a museum should be fixed and invariable; and the interest of the Edinburgh Museum would be greatly increased for the people, who were too far from London to avail themselves of the national museums there, if more exhibits could be temporarily transferred to Edinburgh from London. The Treasury, he was sure, would not grudge the money for the transport of these objects.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS assured the hon. Gentleman that he entirely approved of the principle of the distribution of works of art, in order that as large a number of people as possible might have the opportunity to see them. With regard to the point that no money was yet found for the completion of South Kensington, the Treasury were really tied by the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education and by the fact that a Committee was inquiring at the present moment into the whole administration of South Kensington. The Royal Commission, which reported a short time ago, recommended that part of the staff at South Kensington should be put under the roof of the Education Department at Whitehall. As the Committee knew, the Office of Works was now having plans prepared for new Government offices at Whitehall, and provision would be made for sufficiently large Education Offices to house any additional staff that might have to be placed there. Apart from that objection, it was idle to expect that the House would sanction a large expenditure on South Kensington when the whole subject of South Kensington was under the consideration of a Parliamentary Committee. He could assure the House that the Government were most anxious to get rid of the scandalous condition of the approach to South Kensington, especially at the part next to the Brompton Oratory.

MR. BURNS pressed his point with regard to the Imperial Institute. The building was perfectly useless as it was, and should be diverted to art and education. He was sure that if it were brought to the knowledge of Her Majesty and the Commissioners of the Institute that South Kensington wanted it, the transference would be made. The Institute very soon became a cross between a restaurant and Burlington Arcade, then it "petered-out," until now it had become a centre to which trade union secretaries and officers of friendly societies were invited for cheap dinners.

Vote agreed to.

9. £16,000, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked whether there was any Report published showing the state of the cemeteries abroad?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that a Report existed, but unless the hon. Member could mention a specific case he feared that he could not give him accurate details at the moment. He should be happy, however, to give the hon. Member the Report, while assuring him that the Government watched this subject with great care.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked as to the system of check which prevailed as to the expenditure of money in different parts of the world on embassies and other Government buildings. In Vienna, for example, he found that nothing was charged in the Estimates last year, but this year there was a sum of a thousand guineas for renewing the heating apparatus at the Embassy. There was apparently no check on these items at headquarters in this country.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS said that when he was in China he heard of a case where a building was to be erected at a cost of 1,000 taels. The contract was sublet for 700 taels; the second sub-contractor re-let the contract for 500 taels, and ultimately the amount was reduced to 300 taels. The last sub-contractor began the work but was unable to go on with it for want of funds. Were precautions taken in distant parts of the world in these matters, and what was the nature of the reports received as to the various necessities of the Embassies?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said they had resident surveyors in certain places abroad in charge of these buildings, and there was a surveyor who went from place to place on the continent, while there were other surveyors who were stationed abroad. Reports were placed before the Department, and he had an opportunity of seeing them at certain times of the year. Great care was taken to see that the expenditure was authorised and that the contracts were properly fulfilled. But the work of checking was not so easy as in this country, though he was certain that no more efficient control could be kept than at present.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) drew attention to the rooms for Attachés and Secretaries at the Paris Embassy, and said that some effort should be made to improve the accommodation.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £132,291, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Survey of the United Kingdom, and for minor services connected therewith."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) complained of the confused way in which the Estimate was drawn up. No country existed where the Ordnance maps were more required to be drawn up in an intelligent manner than in Ireland, owing to the fact that every tenant needed a map showing his holding in appearing before the Land Commission. The Ordnance maps were far worse now than they were 50 years ago. The maps made in the forties had all the levels and heights upon them, and they were most valuable details; but they had been omitted in the present maps. Why was this? He understood that the Treasury would not make a sufficient allowance to meet the expense of their production. Many engineers and surveyors used to complain of the fulness of the old maps, saying that the bread was taken out of their mouths, because with those maps anybody could do the work of surveying himself. In consequence of the establishment of the Registration of Titles Office in Ireland, accurate mapping had become very essential. The fine accuracy of the maps of the forties was not now reproduced, although it was so desirable that the details should be microscopically accurate. Why was the survey of Ireland in a more backward state than that of Great Britain; and why was there not a larger stock of the maps published? He urged the Government to exert pressure with a view to bringing the larger Irish survey to a conclusion within a reasonable time. The survey for England was to be completed in 1910, but the survey for Ireland was only to be completed in 1920, and yet there was more necessity for dispatch in the case of the Irish survey than in the case of the British. The information which had been expected from the Government as to the progress of these surveys had not been given. On the last occasion when this Vote was under consideration the President of the Board of Agriculture promised that he would endeavour to make these maps *primâ facie* evidence of their contents. He knew it was not a simple matter, but thought that these maps ought to be constituted good evidence, especially when they had existed unchallenged for 40 or 50 years. For example, a right of way marked in a map 50 years ago ought to be accepted to-day. Take the case of the Giant's Causeway, which had recently been the subject of litigation. The question of a right of way was raised, and the right of way was shown on the map. In such cases more importance ought to be attached to the evidence of the map than was sometimes attributed to it in Courts of Law. When Estimates of this kind were prepared for next year, he hoped that the sums spent in England and Ireland respectively would be distinguished. He observed that £3,000 appeared for work done in the Land Judges' Court in Ireland, although every penny of that sum was repaid to the Government by the suitors in the Court. This ought not to be debited to Ireland. The Estimates were mixed Estimates for the United Kingdom, but in view of future inquiries they ought not to be presented in that way. It ought to be possible to discriminate between the charges for England and Ireland. This was an omnibus Vote and it was, therefore, very difficult to say how much went to pay men in Ireland, and how much to pay men in England. If the Estimates were prepared differently, it might appear that too much was being spent in England and too little in Ireland, but at present it was not possible to form a definite opinion upon the subject. He wished to know what had been done to ameliorate the condition of the clerks about whom so much was heard a year or two ago?

*Sir BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton) said that the civil assistants on the Ordnance Survey were very hardly treated. They received very small pay and no pension. It had been represented that the work of the Ordnance Survey would be finished in 1880, and yet the Department was now as busy as ever. The fact was the work of the Ordnance Survey would never be completed, as it would always be necessary to keep the plans up to date, and these men ought, therefore, to be treated as a permanent staff. Those men who had joined since 1873 had not been allowed to benefit in the superannuation. The hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Ordnance Survey for England would be completed in 1910, and that for Ireland in 1920, but in reality it would never be completed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he had taken it from the Estimates.

*Sir BARRINGTON SIMEON said whoever made the statement must be mistaken. It had been argued that the wages of these men were so good that they did not require pensions. The facts were that after 15 years' service these men would get the great wage of 30s. a week, and after 24 years' service, if they never misconducted themselves and were fortunate, they would get 50s. a week. These men, however, were not labouring men, their education had cost them money, for which they not unnaturally wished to repay themselves. They had, moreover, to keep themselves fairly well dressed. They entered the service at 14, and earned only 50s. a week when 48 years of age. He knew about 600 of them, and they were, many of them, obliged to wear spectacles, their work tried their eyesight so greatly. When they left the service, they found it difficult to obtain fresh employment, especially work requiring good eyesight. He could produce several men who would swear that when they joined the service, they were solemnly told they would receive a pension at the age of 60, and but for this they would never have joined it. He trusted the Government would see their way to help the men for whom he spoke, who deserved pensions much more than many people who received them.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he desired to support the appeal that had just been made on behalf of the civil assistants in the Ordnance Survey. They were mostly engaged in drawing ordnance maps, and he was assured that the work required considerable skill and education. He could not understand why these civil servants were not granted pensions like the rest of the Civil Service of this country. The workers in the Ordnance Survey deserved pensions as much as anyone. Moreover, promotion to the higher posts in the service was denied to them. He thought the officials for whom he was speaking had the additional claim that in this particular Department the avenues to promotion were to a great extent blocked, as the higher positions were held by military men. He did not think it could be for a moment contended that the wages of these servants had been fixed specially on a high scale in view of their not receiving pensions. Even if the Secretary to the Treasury could state that every one of these civil assistants had been warned before he entered the service that he would not get a pension, that would not much alter his mind as to the justice of their claim, because it was a matter of common knowledge that the Treasury might, if they chose to sweat the employés of the country, get men to come into the Civil Service and do work for a much less salary and pension than now obtained. But that was not the principle upon which the public service of the country was run. The Government had always recognised that they ought to treat the Civil Service in a fair spirit, and if any hardship could be proved to exist—even if the men had joined knowing that hardship—it ought to be removed.

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) suggested that reports should be published periodically showing the progress that had been made in the survey.

Mr. CALDWELL complained that the Estimate in the form it was presented did not give the information to which the Members of the Committee were entitled. For instance, with regard to Class A, they simply knew that these men were in receipt of military fees from the Army Fund, but they were not informed the amount. Not only were some of the men drawing the sums mentioned in this Vote, but at the same time they were drawing full pay from the Military Fund. Here it was stated that the Director got £1,200 a year on this Vote, but he should like to know, and they were entitled to know, how much he was drawing as a pension in addition. They did not want to have pluralists coming in and cutting other men out of employment, because they, being pluralists, could afford to do the work at a much less salary than should, perhaps properly, be attached to the office. There ought to appear on the face of the Estimate a statement of the real salaries these men were drawing. The military assistants were not all men who entered the Civil Service and rose gradually in position; they were persons who drew pensions in addition to the pay they received. These pensioners took less pay than men who relied on the employment, and so the rate of wages paid by the State was kept down, but the salaries did not represent all their emoluments. There should be a sheet giving the particulars of what each man received, both pension and salary, and he hoped that fuller information would be given next year.

Mr. LOUGH thought this one of the most important Votes that had come under consideration during the evening. We spent nearly a quarter of a million of money on our Ordnance Survey, and got less value under that head than any country in the world. Our maps compared badly with those of other countries. A short time since he saw some maps of Norway, beautifully coloured in half-a-dozen tints, the whole configuration of the country—rivers, mountains, waterfalls—all clearly shown and beautifully executed. There was much to be done to bring our Ordnance maps up to the level of other countries. The sale of Ordnance maps had never been large, but he noticed there had been a falling off in the sales to the amount of £2,000 or £3,000. Could the right hon. Gentleman explain this? Had he made any progress with the proposal for keeping the maps on sale at post offices? As to the remarks of the hon. Member who had just spoken, he believed this Ordnance Survey Service was little short of a scandal. The right sort of men were not employed, and proper discipline was not maintained among them. The hon. Gentleman opposite complained of the rate of pay, but he did not mention that they were nearly all pluralists—that there were a number of Army and Navy pensioners among them. Each one of these classes was full of pluralists, and the men who were engaged were not selected for the work, and, he considered, were not fit for the work. He believed in public servants being well chosen and well paid, but they could not choose them well if they made a great Service like this a refuge, principally for military men who had not been successful at their other work. Each officer not only received the amount mentioned in the Estimates, but his full Army pay; and, in addition, he saw by the Vote that they were allowed to give lectures at the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, for which they got further emoluments from that Department. How could they have a great Service like this properly conducted under such a system? They should select Gentlemen who were well suited for the positions, and should get the best servants they possibly could in each Department, and then he would go with the hon. Baronet opposite and say that they should pay them well. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would be willing to appoint a Committee to inquire into the important questions raised by the hon. Baronet opposite on the present state of this very important Service.

Major JAMESON (Clare, W.) said he rose to protest against the attack made by the hon. Member who had just sat down, and by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, on the soldiers who were employed in this Service. The hon. Member for Islington had told them that one of the first essentials was discipline. Where would he go for discipline if not to the Army? ["Hear, hear!"] Would he have them go to himself? [*Laughter.*] He thought these men were grossly underpaid, and the hon. Member argued that they should bring up the salaries. But how was he going to begin? He reminded him of the individual who, in order to lengthen his blanket, cut a piece off the top and sewed it on to the bottom. [*Laughter.*] That was just what the hon. Gentleman wished to do. Every single officer who had been appointed to this Survey was a man who was thoroughly trusted by his superiors, and who had done good and long service for his country. He did not believe that in any country in Europe they would get men who had more faithfully served their country, or who were greater authorities on the subject on which they were employed. When he was on active service he had had frequent occasion to consult the Ordnance maps, and had always found them sufficient for his purpose.

Mr. BURNS said the hon. and gallant Gentleman had entirely ignored the criticism directed against the preparation of this Estimate. He found that 24 officers received £7,938, and he was informed that that was pay and allowances given to them plus their military active pay, and, in some cases, plus their pension. The only thing that Members on that side of the Commitee wished was that they should know the total amount of pay they received for Survey work. It was well the Committee should be told what the officers received as active service pay or as pensions in one or other branch of the Imperial Service. If they were they would be able to separate the Survey Vote from the Pluralist Vote, and much of the criticism directed against the Army officers, who had such a large share of these appointments, would be disposed of. His suggestion was that the Estimate should be so framed that the Committee would know what was paid for survey, pensions, and for active military service. It seemed to him that Army Reserve and long-service men, whose pensions were small, might reasonably be employed as labourers and office cleaners; but how could hon. Gentlemen opposite defend two Lieutenant-Colonels getting £1,095, for what, after all, was civil engineer work? The fact that a man belonged to the Army did not prove that his qualifications for survey work were superior to those of civilians. How could the President of the Board of Agriculture, who evinced such great interest in this subject, defend a system under which 1,650 civil assistants got no pensions, while officers got £1,095 for Civil Service survey work, and £400 or £500 a year as pensions? He believed in good salaries, and he was not against Army men being employed under fair and just conditions; but there was a feeling growing that Army Reserve men, and Royal Engineers in particular, were being unduly employed. There were military men in that House who were under the impression that in the Survey Department and in the Science and Art Department, and many other departments, the Royal Engineers should get hold of all the good civilian employment. He protested against it. He thought they ought to have many men like Mr. Stanford and other experts in the Civil Service, and he cordially supported the hon. Baronet in his contention, for he objected to pluralists.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby) said he did not think it was necessary for him to reply to the whole of the speeches. The speech of the hon. Member for Islington had been abundantly replied to from the hon. Member's own side of the House. He was very glad that the interest attacked had found an eloquent and competent defender on the other side. ["Hear, hear!"] When they wanted skilled men for Ordnance Survey work they naturally went to the Royal Engineers, and not to other branches of the Army. The hon. Member for Louth complained earlier in the evening as to the condition of the survey in Ireland. He admitted that the Ordnance Survey, with regard to the production of maps in Ireland, was not so satisfactory as they could wish to see. But he was bound to say that their expenditure in Ireland was fully sufficient, amounting as it did to 24 per cent. of the total expenditure. He was sorry, in regard to the production of the one-inch map, that it was not so modernised as in England, but that was largely owing to the fact that they were anxious to complete the one-inch survey in England. The skilled men who were now employed in England would then be ready for the production of the work in Ireland. Many of the one-inch maps in Ireland were not brought up to modern requirements. They were now endeavouring to complete the one-inch map in England, and so soon as that was done, they could employ the men in bringing the maps in Ireland up to the most modern form. With regard to the general survey map for England, which had been condemned, he had been at considerable trouble to ascertain how it compared with the maps of foreign countries, and all the evidence he could obtain was entirely opposed to the statement that our map was inferior to those of other countries. But any suggestions for the improvement of the map would be considered by the Department, who in the discharge of their duties spared no trouble to secure a satisfactory result. As to the distribution of the maps, a Committee was appointed and made some very valuable recommendations. He had been able to carry out their suggestions, and had arranged that no fewer than 800 post offices should be made depôts for the sale of the maps; and he hoped he would be able to increase the number. These offices were in all parts of the United Kingdom. At each office maps could be ordered, and an index of all the different maps could be consulted. With regard to the military officers, he pointed out that the aggregate amount they received was stated in the footnote to the Vote. The amount they received from the Army Votes was £26,900. He did not think it was reasonable to ask that, in addition to the money paid them for services to the Ordnance Survey, the Vote should state the exact sum that each received as soldiers or as men who had served their country in other branches.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) said the Treasury ought to give some information on this point. A strong case had been made out in favour of the civil assistants, whose claims had been treated with silent contempt.

MR. HANBURY: No, no. The hon. Member knows there is no time to reply.

MR. DILLON said there was plenty of time. These men, who did the bulk of the work, were entitled to more consideration. He had made a calculation, and found that they received an average of £95 a year each.

The HON. MEMBER was speaking at midnight, when the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday, 26th April; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 6th May.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading defered till Thursday 6th May.

TOWN HOLDINGS (TENANTS' COMPENSATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 4th May.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said the First Lord of the Treasury had, early in the sitting, promised to take the Irish Estimates in the month of May. There were one or two Irish questions arising out of other Votes—for instance, the question of the Government refusing to pay rates on Government buildings in some small Irish towns—and he wished to know whether those Votes would be postponed until the Irish Votes were taken?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he was afraid he could not give any pledge; but of course he was always glad to receive suggestions, and, if possible, to act on them.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS asked whether Supply would be proceeded with on the Friday after the holidays?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY replied that on the Monday after the Easter holidays the Necessitous School Boards Bill would be proceeded with. The Thursday following would be devoted either to the Budget or to the introduction of the Employers' Liability Bill, and Supply would be taken on the Friday. Report of Supply would come on naturally on the Monday, when the House reassembled.

VERMINOUS PERSONS BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. WALTER HAZELL (Leicester), who was received with ironical cheers, made an appeal to hon. Members to allow this Bill to pass. There were 60,000 persons living in London lodging-houses who were in danger of becoming infested with vermin—

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not think any hon. Member is raising any objection to the Bill.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): We will not object as long as the other side will give us our Licensing Bill. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

Bill Read a Second time, amid ironical cheers, and committed for Monday next.

SALE OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 29th April.

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 28th April.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till Monday next.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (Yorks, W.R., Spen Valley) objected.

LORD STANLEY said: May I make an appeal to the hon. Member? It is, perhaps, of more value to the Members of this House than the Bill which we have just Read a Second time. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

MR. WHITTAKER said that there must be reasonable time for discussion. Three times when this Bill was down the House had been counted out with the consent of the Government. [*Cries of* "Discuss now!"]

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: We cannot Divide after Twelve o'clock. I object.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

House Adjourned at Ten Minutes after Twelve o'Clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday 12th April 1897.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT 1877 (ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD) (STATUTE).

The Comptroller of the Household reported Her Majesty's answer to the humble Address of the 26th March, as followeth:—

"I have received your Address praying that I will withhold My consent from the Statute made by the Governing Body of Oriel College, Oxford, altering Statute IV. of the Statutes of the College by the insertion after the 18th Clause of a new Clause numbered 18*a*. I will comply with your advice."

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Wednesday till Wednesday 19th May.

TITHE REDEMPTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 3rd May.

QUESTIONS.

CHARGE OF BURGLARY (DOWNPATRICK).

Colonel WARING (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland (1) whether his attention has been drawn to the case of a man who was arrested near the town of Downpatrick, on the morning of Sunday the 21st March, by the constabulary under suspicious circumstances, and charged with having burglariously entered the licensed premises and residence of James M'Cardell, in Downpatrick, and abstracted therefrom a bottle labelled whiskey, and that the prisoner, after being duly cautioned, admitted the burglary; (2) whether he is aware that upon being brought before a local magistrate the prisoner was remanded till the next morning to a special Court, and that upon the prisoner being brought before the remanding magistrate at a special Court, four other Justices (two of them from a country district) attended, and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the remanding local Justice and the clerk of the Petty Sessions, upon the representation of a solicitor appearing for the prisoner that he was not responsible for his acts, forthwith, upon evidence being given by a local medical practitioner, committed him as a lunatic to the asylum; and (3) whether the said Justices were warranted in so acting, instead of duly returning the prisoner for trial; and, if not, whether the attention of the Irish Lord Chancellor has been or will be drawn to the occurrence with a view to prevent a recurrence of such a practice?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The facts are substantially as stated in the first and second paragraphs of the Question, save that the Special Court was composed of five Justices, all of whom reside in the Petty Sessions district in which the offence was committed, and usually sit at the Petty Sessions for that district, and also that the only remonstrance addressed to the magistrates, who decided unanimously, was addressed to them by the Petty Sessions Clerk alone. The magistrates should have returned the prisoner for trial; but, as there seems to be little doubt that the prisoner was not of sound mind when he committed the offence, and as, if he recovers, he will be liable to be re-arrested and committed for trial on the charge, justice will not be defeated, and the proceedings, though irregular, only amount to an error of judgment on the part of the magistrates and do not call for the intervention of the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. J. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.) asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman was aware that the individual in question had been subsequently pronounced to be perfectly sane, with the result that those who had placed him in the asylum had had to bear the cost of his removal?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The information in my possession is directly to the contrary.

UNCLAIMED FUNDS.

MR. J. E. GORDON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the advantage, to the public and the Treasury, of such legislation as will grant to the State custody of funds now in the care of bankers and others, but which have remained unclaimed during a period of years?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): This question has been frequently considered by the Treasury, but the difficulties connected with it are very great, and I am afraid that I cannot undertake to deal with it in the manner suggested by the hon. Member.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SHORTHAND WRITERS.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when, by whom, and for what period the shorthand writers of the House are appointed; whether there is any public competition by tender or otherwise for the post; and whether he is aware that the amount of their charges is about double that usually obtained by shorthand writers?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The shorthand writer is appointed by the Clerk of the House under a Resolution of the House passed on 8th May 1813. The last appointment was in 1872. A fresh appointment is only made on a vacancy arising. I am not aware of any public competition. The scale of charges is fixed by Standing Orders (Table of Fees) at £2 2s. per diem for note-taking, and 9d. per folio of 72 words transcribed. The rate per folio paid by the Treasury to shorthand writers for temporary commissions is 6d., and in the Law Courts the charge is 8d. It is alleged that the fees of barristers, solicitors, and others engaged in Parliamentary work are also on a higher scale. The Treasury, however, has no power in the matter.

SALE OF ESTATE (BANTRY, CO. CORK).

MR. JAMES GILHOOLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state approximately when the sale of the estate of Mr. R. H. E. Whyte, which is situate near Bantry, County Cork, will take place?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am informed that it is not yet possible to state, even approximately, the date at which the sale of this estate will take place. The event will depend, in a very large measure, on the activity shown by the parties having charge of the proceedings.

EDUCATION RESULTS FEES (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, inasmuch as the greater part of the results fees paid by the Intermediate Education Board in Ireland are derived from the Customs and Excise grant, and as the grants made by County Councils in England in aid of technical education are derived from the same source, he can explain on what ground the one is considered by the Science and Art Department to be an endowment, and the other is not; and whether he will direct the Department to give equal treatment in this matter to the English and Irish schools?

*MR. HANBURY (on behalf of Sir J. GORST): The Department have been acting on the decision given by the Public Accounts Committee in 1890, that results fees paid by the Intermediate Education Board out of their original endowment fund should be treated as endowment. I do not know if the Board can say how much, if any, of the fees paid by them is derived from the Customs and Excise grant, and not from the endowment fund, but I will communicate with them on the subject.

BELFAST CORPORATION AND LONDONDERRY IMPROVEMENT BILLS.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, though the evidence given before the Committee of 1896 on the Belfast Corporation and Londonderry Improvement Bills was ordered to be printed, and was printed, in a Blue-book from the shorthand notes, and though part of the time was occupied by witnesses who were called by the Committee and not by the parties, the whole cost of the shorthand writer's notes has been charged to the parties, including a charge to some petitioners in respect of days when they were not represented; will he explain on what grounds the Treasury has refused to pay any part of the cost; and whether, having regard to the fact that some of the petitioners appeared to urge matters of public interest, and that the Bill was sent to a hybrid Committee owing to its semi-public character, the Treasury will now pay the shorthand writer's fees?

*Mr. HANBURY: The facts are, I believe, as stated. I cannot find that the Treasury has ever been asked to pay part of the cost of the shorthand writer's notes, but if such a request were made, I do not see how such a charge on the general taxpayer could be justified. The Acts were not Government Measures, and it is distinctly provided in each Act that the costs, charges, and expenses of and incident to the preparing, applying for, obtaining, and passing the Measures should be paid by the Corporation. I have already explained that the shorthand writer's fees are high, and that the Treasury have no control over them.

LAND COMMISSION.

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in how many cases of fair rent appeals for the second statutory term Mr. Commissioner O'Brien has been a member of the Court adjudicating on the appeals, and in how many cases the Court was exclusively composed of Commissioners appointed by Conservative Governments?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: On Friday last I stated that the composition of the Court when hearing appeals is arranged by the Commissioners amongst themselves, having regard to their other official engagements, and I also mentioned the number of occasions on which each Commissioner sat since October last.

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to the fact that there are over 24,000 applications to have a fair rent fixed by the Land Commission and the Civil Bill Courts now pending, and that only 261 fair rents were fixed during February, being an average of less than three rents for each judicial personage employed; (2) whether he is able to explain the cause of this delay; (3) whether, if it is due to the difficulty which the Sub-Commissioners feel in filling up the pink paper, he will ask the Land Commission to consider the advisability of simplifying that document; and (4) whether he can state what was the total number of fair rents fixed for the second statutory term by Sub-Commissioners up to the end of March, and in how many of these cases appeals have been lodged?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not correct to say that only 261 fair rents were fixed during February. The Sub-Commissioners alone disposed of 685 applications in that month to fix fair rents for a first and second statutory term, in addition to a number of cases disposed of by the Civil Bill Courts. I am unable to answer the third paragraph, but think it probable that, as the Sub-Commission get more accustomed to the work, they will be able to dispose of cases more rapidly. In March, 1,284 applications in all were disposed of, and 2,515 fair rents for second terms have been fixed up to the end of March; 1,191 notices of appeal have been received, including notices in cross cases.

Mr. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether one of the two Assistant Lay Land Commissioners attached to the Strabane Sub-Commission has been withdrawn for the purpose of valuing farms for the Court of Appeal of the Land Commission, with the result that cases are now being heard, farms inspected, and rents fixed by one Assistant Lay Commissioner only; and, if so, whether such practice has the sanction of the Irish Government?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It is the fact that one of the Lay Assistant Commissioners attached to the Strabane Sub-Commission has been withdrawn for the purpose stated, and that cases are now being heard and rents fixed by the Chairman and one Lay Assistant Commissioner, not by the latter alone, as alleged in the Question. The powers of delegation referred to are conferred by statute upon the Land Commission, and do not require the sanction of Government.

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by whose authority or permission Mr. Hume Babington, Permanent Assistant Land Commissioner, absented himself from his duty on Wednesday, the 31st of March last, to attend a meeting of the Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Council, held in Londonderry; was Mr. Babington, as a public official, within his right in assisting to pass a resolution at the said meeting, declaring that Parliament would be guilty of deliberate confiscation if it passed any legislation interfering with the endowments of the Erasmus Smith Schools; and whether, considering the present congested state of business in the Courts, Land Commissioners will be forbidden to attend public meetings, whether of a political or a religous character?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not yet in possession of the facts relative to the alleged attendance of this gentleman at the meeting referred to, and cannot, therefore, reply to the Question to-day.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the reason of the delay of the Land Commission in issuing a list for the hearing of cases fixing fair rents in the Union of Tipperary, seeing that there are over 100 cases already lodged?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: There are 44, not 100, cases pending in this Union, and a list for the hearing of these cases will be issued in the course of the next ten days.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will make inquiry into the case of a tenant farmer named Thomas Tracey, of Newcastle, near Athenry, county Galway, whose application (Record No. 15,580) to fix fair rent on the estate of Captain Hall was heard on 4th January last; whether any, and, if so, what, objection was taken at the hearing to the area of the farm as mentioned in the originating notice; whether he is aware that, notwithstanding, the land agent, on inspection of the holding by the Sub-Commissioners, then raised an objection as to the area for which the tenant had been paying rent, and thereupon the Sub-Commissioners adjourned the case for evidence as to area; and whether it is the practice to put the tenant to the inconvenience and expense of again attending in Court, where the landlord objecting to the area, failed at the hearing to give evidence as to his alleged area?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No objection was made at the hearing, but it appears that, on the inspection of the farm by the Assistant Commissioners, the representative of the landlord and the tenants disagreed as to the boundaries of the holding, and the case, following the usual procedure, was adjourned in order to enable the parties to come to a mutual agreement. If the parties agree without further delay, no further hearing will be necessary.

DISTRESS (ACHILL ISLAND, CO. MAYO).

Dr. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the great distress at present prevailing in Achill Island, county Mayo; is he aware that there were on outdoor relief, in the month of February 1897, 384 persons as compared with 72 in the corresponding month in 1896; and whether, in view of these facts, he will see that remunerative relief works are at once established in the island?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Representations have been received relative to the existence of distress in Achill Island. The numbers on outdoor relief in the island in February last were 417 as compared with 46 in February 1896. The construction of a pier has been undertaken by the Congested Districts Board at Keel, and this work will no doubt afford employment to a number of persons in that district. I hope also that work will shortly be commenced at Achill Sound in connection with the proposed steamer service between the present railway terminus and Belmullet. It is not the intention of the Government to establish relief works.

KASSALA.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Government has been called to declarations by the Italian Ministers to the effect that Kassala is about to be restored to Egypt; what calculation has been made of the cost to the Egyptian Budget of holding that post, estimated by the Italian Minister of Marine as £60,000 a year; and what military measures are in contemplation for the protection of Kassala when handed over?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): We have not heard of any declarations by Italian Ministers of the character referred to, nor have Her Majesty's Government received any intimation of such an intention from the Italian Government. If any such intimation were made it would be for the Egyptian Government to examine the military and financial questions involved, and to consider whether the offer could be accepted.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (EAST LANCASHIRE PAPER MILL COMPANY).

COLONEL MELLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the inquiry into the case of the workpeople of the East Lancashire Paper Mill Company in Radcliffe, alleged to have been dismissed for giving evidence in a recent case arising out of the Employers' Liability Act, has been completed; if the representatives of the Company were afforded the same opportunity for stating their case when the Treasury Solicitor visited Radcliffe as was afforded to the discharged workpeople; if he will state the result of the inquiry; and whether he would consider the expediency of introducing into an amended Employers' Liability Act the provisions of the Protection of Witnesses Act, for the protection of workpeople who may be called upon to give evidence in cases arising out of the Employers' Liability Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The inquiry which the Treasury Solicitor instituted at my request was completed some days ago. As its object was to ascertain if there were any grounds for a prosecution, he naturally did not take statements from persons who might have been involved in a criminal charge. The result, however, showing that no prosecution could be undertaken, I have given the company an opportunity of explaining their action, and they have submitted statements to show that two of the men were dismissed for bad work, the third for disobedience. I cannot say that I am able to regard the explanation as quite satisfactory; the more so that no explanation is attempted of their dismissal of the sister of the plaintiff in the suit, a point to which I called their special attention. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not think that the matter comes within the scope of the Employers' Liability Bill.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the postal authorities have communicated with the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland respecting the carriage by rail of the mails to and from Bundoran and Ballyshannon, in the county of Donegal, and adjacent districts, now carried by car to the great inconvenience of the residents of those districts; and, if so, with what result; and whether these districts will receive from the 1st proximo the benefits of the accelerated mail system?

*MR. HANBURY: The Post Office has communicated with the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland respecting the conveyance of the night mails to and from Bundoran and Ballyshannon by railway instead of by car, but it is found that the expense involved in the establishment of suitable trains would be altogether disproportionate to the revenue available. With regard to the accleration to take effect on the 1st proximo—that is of the day mail services in Ireland—the Department has not yet received any definite reply from the railway company as to whether they can extend the benefits of the acceleration to the district between Dundalk and Enniskillen, but there is, it is feared, little probability of including Ballyshannon and Bundoran and other places beyond Enniskillen in the arrangement.

MR. HORACE PLUNKETT (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can state to the House the reasons which caused the Postmaster General to refuse to grant the request of the deputation from the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, which waited upon him on Tuesday the 6th instant, viz., that the whole of the two hours gained by the recent acceleration of the Irish mails might be devoted every day to increase the time in Ireland between the arrival and dispatch of the mails, so that merchants and others might have good time to answer their letters by return of post?

*MR. HANBURY: The reason was the practical impossibility of the proposal. The down night mails cannot all be ready before 8.30 at the earliest. At 8.30 the Scotch mail starts, and as an interval of at least 15 minutes is necessary for safety, the Irish mail cannot start before 8.45. The up night mail leaves Dublin 50 minutes later than hitherto. This extension of time has been obtained by connecting the up night mail at Crewe with a later train than hitherto for the north of Scotland, which means some sacrifice of postal convenience. The severance of the connection with the north which would follow any later dispatch from Dublin would be wholly without justification. Besides that, the arrival of the Irish mail in London would be later than formerly, and a smaller proportion of the letters would fall into the first delivery. The time of departure from London of the night down train and the time of arrival at Crewe and London of the night up train are thus fixed conditions of the problem, and (with the contract margin of two hours and five minutes at Holyhead between the arrival of the up mail and the departure of the down mail) make a larger extension of time in Ireland impracticable.

INDIAN FAMINE.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the demand made by the Bengal Branch of the Famine Relief Fund on the Central Relief Fund for about one-third of the entire Fund; whether he has information that out of 51½ lacs already distributed 11 lacs have been assigned to Bengal, while the North-West Provinces and Oudh have received 17 lacs; whether on the basis of proportionate distress as revealed by the number of persons on relief works, the North-West Provinces and Oudh would be entitled to 51·45 per cent of the total receipts, and Bengal to only 12·75; and whether he is in a position to exercise any influence over the administrators of the Central Fund to secure that it shall be fairly and proportionately distributed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I am not aware of the proportions in which the Famine Relief Fund has been allotted by the Central Committee between the various affected districts, but I know that the distribution is made after a careful consideration of their competing claims. I have also reason to believe that the Central Committee is in constant communication with the Government of India, and gladly accepts its advice and assistance. But I have no influence in the matter, nor does it appear to me to be possible or desirable for any person in this country to attempt to control the local administration of the Fund.

MR. JAMES BIGWOOD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can explain why it is that the allowance sanctioned from 1st November 1896 as grain compensation to all native employés (Government servants) in the famine-stricken districts, drawing 10 rupees per month and under, was not given to the recipients till the middle of March 1897; and whether any Government department is especially responsible for this delay in distribution?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Grain compensation is sanctioned by the local authorities, and the dates of such sanctions are not necessarily reported to the central Government: but I have sufficient information to enable me to say that in many cases the compensation was granted before November 1 1896. As to the delay alleged to have taken place, by which the grant was postponed beyond the middle of March 1897, I have no knowledge at present; but if the name of the district in question is supplied to me I will make inquiry.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists with the administration of the famine relief and the management of famine relief works in the district of

Cuddapore, in the Presidency of Madras; and whether he will cause to be published, or lay upon the Table of the House, the Reports recently addressed to the Government of Madras on the state of the district by the Famine Commissioner and the Sanitary Commissioner?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I am not aware that dissatisfaction exists with regard to the administration of relief in the Cuddapore district. The latest monthly relief Report from Madras shows that at the end of January an area containing 284,000 inhabitants, and amounting to about one-fifth of the district, was considered to be affected. On March 6, 2,735 persons in this area were employed on relief works and 7,488 were receiving gratuitous relief. The unusually large proportion of people receiving gratuitous relief, which is attributed to the large "numbers of weavers relieved at their trade," warrants a belief that the administration of relief in Cuddapore is not illiberal. All reports relating to the famine in Madras have been and will be included in the Famine Papers presented periodically to Parliament while the famine continues. I should add that the Governor is giving very close supervision to the administration of famine relief within his presidency.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the attention of the Irish Government has been drawn to the statement contained in a recent charge at Buncrana of the Coroner for the County of Donegal (within recent years a Member of this House) to the prevalent indications of efforts now being made in County Donegal to re-establish secret unlawful societies; and (2) whether, in view of such indications, the Government will reconsider the question of reducing the strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary in that county?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The attention of the Irish Government has been directed to recent observations made by the Coroner of Donegal in the sense indicated in the first paragraph. I do not think the Coroner was a Member of this House, though his predecessor was. In reducing the strength of the County Force, the responsible authorities have been guided both by experience and by local knowledge, and the Government see no reason, at present, for reconsidering the question.

POSTMASTERSHIP (MONAGHAN).

Mr. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, with reference to the recent vacancy in the postmastership of Monaghan, how many applications were received in reply to his invitation from applicants for this vacancy, of these how many were members of the First Class in the postal and telegraph branches of the Service, and of the aggregate number of applicants how many had a service of from 15 to 20 years, what number had a service of 20 and under 25 years, and how many with a service of over 25 years; and whether the gentleman upon whom the vacancy has been conferred entered the Service and obtained the certificate of his appointment in May 1885, and that until the date of his present appointment was a member of the Second Class of Sorting Clerks; if so, what particular qualifications did he possess that entitled him to this preferment over others his seniors and with a more diversified knowledge and experience of both postal and telegraph duties?

*__Mr. HANBURY__: The number of applications received for the Postmastership of Monaghan was 83. Of these, 22 were from members of the First Class; 17 candidates had service of from 15 to 20 years; 10 candidates had service of from 20 to 25 years; and five had over 25 years' service. The officer on whom the appointment was conferred entered the Service with a certificate in May 1885, and until the date of his present appointment was a Second Class Telegraphist or Sorting Clerk. Many of the candidates were from offices not in Ireland. The Postmaster General decided, however, in this case to appoint from the Irish list, and to select the officer on that list whose claims and qualifications best entitled him, in his opinion, to the promotion. The particular qualifications possessed by the selected candidate included a good knowledge of both postal and telegraph work, and experience in the duties of a head postmaster, gained during his service as a provincial clerk in charge, in which capacity he had undertaken the full management of post offices during the absence of postmasters.

WALLACE ESTATE (CO. ANTRIM).

MR. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to a circular sent by Mr. Fred. L. Capron, agent on the County Antrim Estate of the Lady Wallace, issued last month to the tenants, informing the tenants that, as they had not accepted the offer for sale made to them by Lady Wallace, that the rent due on 1st November last must be paid before 1st May next, otherwise the matter would be placed in the hands of his solicitor; (2) whether he is aware that it was the custom on this estate to allow a hanging gale or rent for one year to lie over; that, after the passing of the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1881, a large number of these tenants agreed to have judicial rents fixed at the amounts to be fixed by a Mr. Wilson, the landlord's valuer; and that, notwithstanding that it took some years to have the valuations made, and the tenants signed the judicial agreements in a body in 1884, the reductions dated back to 1882 and Judicial Rent was marked on rent receipts from the latter date; (3) whether these tenants are now entitled to have fair rents fixed in respect of a second statutory term; and (4) if something can be done to dissuade the agent from enforcing at this time of the year payment of the hanging gale?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that a circular to the effect stated in the first paragraph has been issued to the tenants on this estate. A considerable number of agreements and declarations under Section 8, Sub-section (6), of the Land Act of 1881, fixing fair rents on the estate, were lodged with the Land Commission in the year 1884, but the Commissioners cannot express any opinion as to whether the tenants in these cases are now entitled to apply to have fair rents fixed for a second statutory term. They may have to determine the matter judicially. The Executive Government exercises no control over the management of the estate, and cannot take any action as suggested in the fourth paragraph.

TELEGRAMS (BELFAST).

MR. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that delay is caused to traders in the delivery of telegrams in Mount Pottinger, Belfast, owing to the fact that the Post Office there is not one of delivery; and if he can see his way, in view of the largely increased population, to have it made an office of delivery?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware that delay is caused to traders in the delivery of telegrams in Mount Pottinger, Belfast, owing to the fact that the Post Office there is not one for delivery. He will, however, make inquiry on the subject and will communicate with the hon. Member.

SCIENCE AND ART EXAMINATIONS.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he will consent to defer the Science and Art examinations in chemistry and other subjects, at present fixed for the 21st and 22nd of June, to a more convenient date?

MR. HANBURY (on behalf of Sir J. GORST): It has been arranged to postpone the Science and Art examinations, fixed for the 19th, 21st, and 22nd, to the 28th, 29th, and 30th of June. A circular is being sent to the schools to this effect.

METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

MR. ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board (1) whether he will direct the Metropolitan Asylums Board to make use of existing institutions; and, therefore, will the Local Government Board direct the Guardians to board out all eligible children; (2) whether those children who have contracted the diseases enumerated in the Order require institutional life; if so, is it the intention of the Local Government Board to instruct the Metropolitan Asylums Board to erect new institutions or to provide them with certain of the existing schools; and, if so, which of them; and (3) would he inform the House whether he intends to carry out those recommendations of the Departmental

Committee which deal with the improvement of the education, the industrial training, the system of apprenticeship, and the greater control of the "ins and outs;" the development of small certified homes, the emigration of suitable children, and the alleviation of the condition of the 3,000 children now in the London workhouses (see page 67, paragraph 274); if so, to which of the various London bodies does he intend to intrust these duties?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): With regard to the first two paragraphs, it will be the duty of the managers of the Metropolitan Asylum district, in the first instance, to consider what provisions are necessary under the recent Order of the Local Government Board, and to submit them for the consideration of the Board. As the Order constituting the managers as the new authority has only been in force a few days, it is obvious that they cannot have come to any decision on the arrangements which they will propose, and that I cannot make any statement as to what the arrangements will be. I am not quite clear as to what is meant by "institutional life," and, with regard to boarding out, while the Board have been always desirous of encouraging the system, I am not aware that we have any power to compel the Guardians to adopt it against their will; nor should I be willing to pledge myself to exercise that power as the hon. Member desires, even if we had. With regard to the long series of questions contained in the third paragraph, I have stated the general views of the Board in the House already, and it would be quite impossible for me to make a detailed statement upon them in reply to a question. But I may say that all the powers and duties of Guardians with reference to children which are not transferred to the Metropolitan Asylums Board will still devolve on the Guardians in accordance with the existing law. I should add that the hon. Member is in error in supposing that there are 3,000 children in the workhouses. I am advised that there are less than 1,000, and many of these on one ground or another are unfitted for ordinary school life. But it is always my desire to separate children as far as possible from any connection with workhouse life.

GRANGEGORMAN PRISON.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether, when he stated that Grangegorman Prison is primarily a convict prison, he had considered the fact that the number of convicts confined there are only 33, while the daily average of local prisoners is over 160; (2) can he state how many officers in Grangegorman hold appointments to the convict service, by whom and when the appointments were made, the rank of the officers, and length of service (if any) in a local prison prior to their promotion to the convict prison; (3) is he aware that there is a statutory distinction between the convict and the local prisons in Ireland; and (4) do convict prisons, established and governed by the Penal Servitude Acts, constitute organisations separate and distinct in law from local prisons; and, if so, are there two distinct prisons by statute in Grangegorman—namely, a convict and a local prison?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The numbers mentioned in the first paragraph are substantially accurate. The answer to the third and fourth paragraphs is in the affirmative. It will take some time to collect the information asked for in the second paragraph, and I am not in a position to give it to-day.

BANKRUPTCY ASSETS (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether it is the present practice of the Dublin Court of Bankruptcy that the assets realised should be lodged in the Bank of Ireland in the joint names of the official assignees and the creditors' assignees, in accordance with Section 61 of the Irish Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, 1857, and General Orders 242 and 243, made pursuant to the Bankruptcy Amendment Act, 1872; whether he is aware that in the case of Thomas F. Peel, a bankrupt, the acting official assignee, after the assets had been distributed, brought an appeal to the House of Lords against a decision of the Irish Court of Appeal, unanimously reversing a decision in said matter, that the creditor's assignee had refused to be a party to such proceedings, though by General Order 247 the creditor's assignee is bound to exercise a general superintendence over the proceedings, and that the appeal was dismissed by the House of Lords, without hearing the respondent's counsel, with costs, Lord Herschell expressing his surprise that such an appeal should have been brought; and could he state what was the amount of the costs, and out of what fund, and by whose authority, they were paid?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The money received by the official assignee is regularly lodged in the Bank of Ireland in the manner required by the statute and General Orders to the credit of the estate and the assignees thereof. The hon. Member has, however, overlooked the fact that the General Orders of 1888 revoked the General Order 243 of the Orders of 1872 which he refers to. The appeal, which had been advised by two eminent English counsel, was brought after the assets had been disturbed. The creditor's assignee, on hearing that an appeal was contemplated, resigned his office, stating that he had never desired to hold it and was accordingly, by order made at his own request, removed, and the appeal to the House of Lords was not lodged till after his removal. According to the verbatim report of the proceedings, Lord Herschell does not appear to have made any statement to the effect that the appeal ought not to have been brought, and I am informed that the decision of the House of Lords in this case was largely influenced by their decision in a case of Hebly *v.* Mathews, pronounced only a few days previously, overruling a decision of the Court of Appeal in England, on which the advice given by counsel was in some degree based. The costs named amounted to the sum of £1,006 9s. 6d., and were paid out of the unclaimed dividends account, in accordance with the provisions of the 35 and 36 Vict. c. 58, sec. 77, and the 40 and 41 Vict. c. 57, sec. 85.

SULGRAVE NATIONAL SCHOOL (NORTHAMPTONSHIRE).

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (1) whether he is aware that the National School at Sulgrave, Northamptonshire, has for years past been the subject of repeated disputes and conflicts between rival bodies of managers whose authority individually and collectively has been continually challenged, with the result that the school has been closed (owing to inability to pay the teachers on account of failure of subscriptions) for nine months in 1893, and for six months in 1896; that a poll of the parish, taken on 28th December, 1896, resulted in a majority for forming a School Board; and that the Parish Council has at a subsequent meeting further applied to the Education Department to form a School Board; and (2) whether the Education Department will now issue an order for the formation of a School Board, as the most prompt and permanent settlement of the educational difficulties of the parish?

*MR. HANBURY (on behalf of Sir J. GORST): The facts are as stated in paragraph (1), except that the Committee of Council have received no information as to the poll said to have been taken on 28th December, 1896. A final notice issued by the Education Department has expired, but the Department is informed that the school has now been reopened under a certificated teacher; there therefore appears to be no reason for setting up a School Board in pursuance of the final notice.

MR. CHANNING: In consequence of the right hon. Gentleman's reply, I shall put a further Question after the recess.

PASSENGERS FROM AUSTRALIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience suffered by passengers from Australia in the Peninsular and Oriental mail steamships who have, through the admission on board at Aden of Bombay passengers, to undergo quarantine at Brindisi and Marseilles; and whether arrangements will be made with the Peninsular and Oriental Company which, without loss to the Company, will obviate this inconvenience, in view of the large number of Australian passengers coming to England this year?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General's attention has not been directed officially, either by the contractors or by the passengers concerned, to the alleged inconvenience suffered by passengers on board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamers, through the admission on board at Aden of Bombay passengers, to undergo quarantine at Brindisi and Marseilles. The Postmaster General does not see, however, what arrangements could be made by him to obviate the alleged inconvenience, and he cannot regard it as in accord with the duty of his Department to incur any expense in the matter.

LABOURER'S COTTAGE (IRELAND).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is yet in a position to say why James Donohue has refused to give possession of the cottage and land provided by the Kildysart Board of Guardians for a labourer named Thomas Ayers?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The difficulty in this case arose from the fact that Mr. Donohue desired to utilise the material of the old house in which Ayers lived in order to fence in the plot on which the new cottage was being erected, but Ayers refused to give up possession. The Guardians have ordered that, unless the new cottage was completed by the 9th instant, proceedings were to be taken against the contractor and his sureties.

GAMBLING IN OPTIONS AND FUTURES.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will obtain information from the British Consul in Berlin respecting the terms of the German Law prohibiting gambling in futures; and whether he can obtain details as to the administration and effect of the law since its introduction in January 1897?

Mr. HANBURY (on behalf of Mr. Ritchie): Some information giving the more prominent provisions of the new German law was published in the *Board of Trade Journal* in September last, and the Board will endeavour to obtain through the Foreign Office a report by the lately appointed Commercial Attaché at Berlin respecting the administration of the law and its effect during the short time it has been in operation.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the administration of the Canadian law prohibiting gambling in futures, whether of stocks or merchandise; and whether he will obtain evidence to show what has been the effect of this legislation during the past three years in the Dominion of Canada?

Mr. HANBURY (on behalf of Mr. Ritchie): Yes, Sir; the Board of Trade will ask the Colonial Office to obtain a Report from the Canadian Government upon the administration of the law referred to, and what has been the effect.

LAND TAX.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in assessing the Land Tax the Local Commissioners have any power to adopt as the basis of their valuation an old Income Tax assessment of 1893 instead of the assessment for 1896-7; and whether the Local Commissioners have any power to make a second demand upon payers of Land Tax who have already paid their quota of the tax in accordance with the demand made upon them, and who hold receipts for the payment of Land Tax for the current year?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): New assessments under Schedule A of the Income Tax Acts are made quinquennially, and, consequently, the assessment made in 1893, as modified in particular cases by subsequent appeals, is still in force, and would be properly used for the purposes of Section 31 (1) of the Finance Act, 1896. The Commissioners of Land Tax for any parish have to raise the full quota charged against the parish, or so much of it as does not exceed the amount which would be raised by a rate of 1s. in the pound on the "annual value" of the unexonerated properties. If their assessment fails to produce the required sum in full, they have power to raise the deficiency by a reassessment of those properties.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will be able to lay upon the Table of the House, before the discussion takes place on the Budget, a copy of the circular to the Land Tax authorities which he has instructed the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to issue?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: No, Sir; I do not think this can be done. What I undertook was, that this circular should be issued before the next Land Tax assessments are made.

BELFAST ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

MR. F. B. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he would explain to the House under what circumstances the decision of the Education Department in 1893, with reference to the placing of the Roman Catholic school at Buckfast on the list of schools receiving an annual grant, was last year reversed?

MR. HANBURY (on behalf of Sir J. GORST): The Roman Catholic school was refused annual grants by the Education Department under a mistaken interpretation of the law, which has now been corrected in consequence of an opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown. The Education Department did not consider that, under such circumstances, the refusal should be continued.

GOLD COAST.

MR. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the effect of recent legislation on the Gold Coast, namely, the Supreme Court Amendment Ordinance, 1897, and the District Commissioners Ordinance, 1897, will be, that the natives will be largely deprived of the safeguard of trial by jury, which they have enjoyed in the British Courts for the last 50 years; whether Her Majesty's Judges at the Gold Coast were consulted before the recent legislation on the administration of justice; whether he has received a request from the local Bar, praying him to withhold his advice to Her Majesty to give the Royal Assent to these Ordinances, pending the receipt of a memorial on the subject; and whether he has been able to grant such petition?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The first mentioned ordinance only substitutes a quarterly for a monthly assize. The second extends the summary jurisdiction of the District Commissioners, but only makes general a jurisdiction which had been previously conferred by the Chief Justice under his statutory powers on the District Commissioners of certain districts. The Chief Justice is a member of the Legislative Council by which these ordinances were passed. I have not received any petition with regard to them.

Mr. Laurence Hardy.

MR. GODDARD: May I ask whether I am correctly informed that there are now 84 offences which can be tried by the District Commissioner?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That does not arise out of the Question. If the hon. Gentleman wants particulars he must give notice.

POSTAL CHARGES.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, as the postal charges between Austria-Hungary and Germany, between the United States and Canada, and between France and Algeria are identical with the domestic rates of the country of origin in each instance, any doubt can be entertained as to the right of the United Kingdom to enter into similar arrangements with the Governments of other parts of the Empire; and whether, instead of merely strongly urging the recognition of this right, as the Government has already undertaken to do, an authoritative declaration of the complete freedom of action of the various postal authorities of the British Empire will be made at the forthcoming Postal Union Congress?

*MR. HANBURY: The circumstances in the cases which my right hon. Friend has instanced are not the same as in the case of the United Kingdom and its Colonies, the mails to and from many of the British Colonies having to pass through foreign countries and paying transit rates to the country of transit.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that we are bound not to make any arrangement with our own Colonies?

MR. HANBURY: No, I do not wish my right hon. Friend to understand that at all.

LIVERPOOL DOCKS (LOADING ACCIDENTS).

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the large number of accidents which occur at the Liverpool Docks in connection with the loading of vessels owing mainly to defective machinery; and whether the Board of Trade can enforce stricter regulations with a view to reduce the number of preventible accidents?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: My attention has been drawn to this matter. Accidents in the Liverpool Docks have been numerous; but it is not correct to say that they are mainly due to defective machinery. The statements on the subject which have appeared in the local papers I believe to be exaggerated. So far as the accidents are due to preventible causes, the Factory Inspectors will use every means in their power to secure the safety of the workmen.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Colonel BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether all the arrangements for the representation of the Militia force at the Jubilee Procession on 22nd June have been completed, or whether applications will still be received from the Commanding Officers of regiments which are out at that time for their annual training to send detachments for duty on that day?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): The arrangements are not yet completed; but applications from Officers Commanding are not required, as due notification will be made to those regiments which will be represented.

Mr. FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, having regard to the character of the services of the Royal Naval Reserve officers and men, it will be possible to arrange for their representation in the Jubilee Procession?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): My hon. Friend may be assured that the claims of the Royal Naval Reserve to representation in the Jubilee Procession have not been overlooked.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in connection with the Diamond Jubilee celebration, there is any intention of causing the loss of a day's pay to Government employés either on the 21st or 22nd June; and, if so, whether he will take steps to put a stop to an enforced holiday with loss of pay, which would be a serious matter to numbers of Government workers on wages as low as 19s. and 20s. a week.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The spending department of the War Office and Admiralty propose that there should be a holiday and full life upon Jubilee Day, Tuesday, June 22. They also propose, as is usual when there is a holiday on Tuesday, that the works should not be in operation on the Monday, but they will take care that steps are taken which may prevent any obligatory loss of earnings to the men.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he has received a memorial from the Royal Northern Agricultural Society, suggesting various Amendments to the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill; and whether he will consider these suggestions sympathetically when he reconsiders the Act with a view to its Amendment?

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Walter Long, Liverpool, West Derby): I have received the memorial to which the hon. Member refers, and I shall be happy to give my very careful consideration to the suggestions which it contains.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dr. FARQUHARSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, seeing how short-handed the Army Medical Department is at Home, and the difficulty of getting leave, he will arrange some system of relief so as to enable medical officers to obtain leave according to regulations?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Arrangements are in progress which, it is hoped, will afford greater facilities to military medical orders for obtaining leave.

TOKAT MASSACRE.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received any further information as to the massacre of Armenians at Tokat on 19th March; whether he can give the number of Armenians murdered and the number of houses looted on that occasion; and whether the Turkish Governor at Tokat took no steps to protect the Armenians, but rather encouraged the massacre?

Mr. CURZON: On March 25th Sir P. Currie reported that Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Sivas (Major Bulman) and the Russian Vice Consul at Samsoun were to go to Tokat as representing the six Embassies to watch the proceedings of the Turkish Commissioners. On March 31st Major Bulman reported that 89 persons had been killed, and 36 wounded, and 250 houses pillaged at Tokat, and that four neighbouring villages had been pillaged; 24 houses in them looted, and 35 of their inhabitants killed. Her Majesty's Ambassador was informed by the Foreign Minister, on the 4th inst., of the arrest of Hakki Pasha, the Military Commandant at Tokat, who had been reported by both the French and British Vice Consuls as principally responsible for the massacre, and whose arrest and dismissal had been demanded by the Ambassadors. On the 7th inst. Sir Philip Currie heard from Major Bulman that there had been 185 arrests at Tokat. The Commandant was ordered to Erzingian, but Major Bulman protested and demanded his trial. In connection with the Tokat massacres the Vali of Sivas, the Governor of Tokat, the Commander of Gendarmerie, and the Commissioner of Police have already been dismissed.

NAVAL GUNS.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will consider the suggestion recently made by a distinguished naval officer as to re-arming 17 of the 45 vessels in commission or Reserve at present armed with muzzle-loading guns of an obsolete pattern, seeing that the total expense would probably scarcely exceed a million sterling, that our effective naval force would thus be increased, and moreover a saving take place by the reduction of a number of ships which are only nominally effective?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: This Question is under the careful consideration of the Admiralty, but it is too large and important to be properly dealt with in reply to a Question across the floor of the House. The Question had better be reserved for some favourable opportunity.

MILITIA TRAINING (QUEEN'S COUNTY).

Dr. McDONNELL (Queen's Co., Leix): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the fact that for 10 years the Roman Catholic members of Militia regiments in training in Queen's County were marched on holidays of obligation to Church as on Sundays; whether this practice has been departed from in recent years; is he aware that the present Colonel did not march them last year or give them permission to go, but had them employed in drill or other work; and whether the War Office authorities will see that Roman Catholic members of Irish Militia regiments will be afforded opportunities of practising their religion on all holidays of obligation?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I am informed that the practice has not been departed from in recent years, and that every facility is given to Roman Catholic members of Irish Militia regiments for practising their religion on such holidays.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COUNCIL.

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether he is aware that the Middlesex County Council have proposed to make a bye-law, under Section 16 of the Local Government Act 1888, punishing as a criminal offence the use of abusive language in any house, building, garden, or other place abutting on or near to a street or public place; (2) whether the words "to the annoyance of any person in such street or public place" are contained in the draft bye-law; and (3) if such bye-law has been proposed, whether he has sanctioned or intends to sanction it?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The draft bye-law referred to has been submitted to me by the Council, and it does not contain the words mentioned in the second paragraph of the Question. Even, however, with this limitation it appears to me to be somewhat too wide, and I have asked the Council to confine it to cases where the abusive language is such as to put some person in actual fear or to cause a breach of the peace.

BRIXTON PRISON.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Commissioners propose to re-open Brixton Prison as an establishment for training convicts in handicraft occupations?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Brixton prison is still in the temporary possession of the War Office Authorities, and nothing has been decided as to the uses to which it shall be put if it ceases to be needed for military purposes.

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION (HEYWOOD).

Mr. J. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, notwithstanding that in June 1895 the Education Department, in reply to their request, informed the Town Council of Heywood that an Order would be forthwith issued for the election of a School Board for the borough, the Department has now, after a third request from the Town Council, declined to issue the Order, alleging that that body does not represent the wishes of a majority of the ratepayers; whether the Department has any authority under Section 12 of the Education Act of 1870 to refuse for such a reason to act upon a statutory resolution of a municipal corporation in favour of the formation of a School Board, and whether there is any precedent for the adoption of such a course; and whether the land has been acquired, or more than a small portion of the required funds has been raised, for the additional school accommodation which, it is stated, is in course of being supplied, and how long a time is likely to elapse before such accommodation is provided?

Mr. HANBURY (on behalf of Sir J. Gorst): The Department has declined to issue the Order. The words of Section 12 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870 are: "The Education Department may, if they think fit, cause a School Board to be formed." These words vest a discretion in the Department. There is a precedent for the course taken, in the case of Winchester in 1875. As regards the concluding part of the hon. Member's Question, the Department has made inquiries of the inspector, but have not yet received a reply.

CRETE.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a Supplementary Estimate will be submitted to defray the costs of the operations now being carried on in the Island of Crete?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: So far as can be at present foreseen there will be no necessity for a Supplementary Estimate to defray the cost of the transport and maintenance of the British contingent in Crete.

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE (JUDICIAL BRANCH).

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in some provinces of India the judicial branch of the Indian Civil Service is being encroached upon and its proper functions circumscribed by the appointment of Revenue Officers to perform judicial work; and that in some instances the trial of Sessions cases has been transferred to District Magistrates, who presumably are without adequate judicial training; and is this partial supersession of the provincial judiciary of India due to the exercise of the power given to the Executive Authorities under the amended Criminal Procedure Code, to invest District Magistrates and other Revenue Officers with judicial functions; and, if so, will inquiry be made as to the desirability of these provisions of the

Code being revised or restricted, so that the confidence of the people in the administration of justice may be maintained?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am not aware that the judicial branch of the Service is being encroached upon. It is true that local governments in the non-regulation provinces have the power of investing District Magistrates with authority to try offences not punishable with death; but this power was not conferred by the amended code; it has existed for 25 years, and I am not aware that it has been exercised more freely of late than at any former time, nor have I any reason to think that the existing law requires alteration.

HIGHWAY ROBBERIES (LONDON).

MR. THOMAS B. CURRAN (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to repeated recent cases of violent personal assault with robbery, committed after nightfall in South London, especially the Borough; and whether he will take immediate steps to strengthen the ordinary or detective police force, which at present appears insufficient?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, Sir, my attention has not been called to repeated recent cases of this kind occurring in South London. Not more than seven cases of anything approaching assault with robbery are known by the police to have occurred since the beginning of the year, and in all of these arrests were made at the time. There appears to me to be no necessity for increasing the strength of the force as suggested.

LOCAL BYE-LAWS.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been drawn to the practical extension of the criminal law through the enactment of bye-laws by local authorities in other than sanitary matters, and especially to the novel and extended exercise recently of the power to make bye-laws for good rule and government conferred by Section 23 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, and by Section 16 of the

Local Government Act, 1888; and whether, having regard to the fact that, in the year 1895 no fewer than 74,703 persons were committed to prison in default of payment of fines, out of a total number of 142,579 persons committed to prison, he will consider whether it woud be advisable to impose further restrictions on the creation of new criminal offences by bye-law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): My attention has not been called to the matter referred to in the Question of the hon. Member, but I understand that the Home Office insist on all bye-laws being submitted in draft, that they are carefully examined and criticised, and that the Secretary of State constantly requires the withdrawal of bye-laws which appear likely to be oppressive or too stringent in their operation. I am not prepared, upon the information before me, to say that any further restrictions are necessary.

IVORY (CASE OF MR. EDWARD).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Mr. Edward Ivory, an American citizen, who was imprisoned in London for four months, has made a claim on the Government for damages for false imprisonment; and whether this claim has yet reached the Government; and, if so, what action the Government intend to take in the matter.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No such claim as that to which the hon. Member refers has been received at the Foreign Office.

KINGSTOWN HARBOUR ROADS BILL.

MR. HORACE PLUNKETT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the Town Commissioners and inhabitants of Kingstown are much aggrieved at the withdrawal of the Kingstown Harbour Roads Bill; whether the Treasury will consent to the re-introduction of the Bill next Session; and whether it is possible to make such arrangements in the meantime as will place the inhabitants of Kingstown in the position with respect to these roads which they would have occupied if the Bill had not been opposed and consequently withdrawn?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The Bill to which my hon. Friend refers was withdrawn because it belongs to a class of Measures which can only be properly treated as public Bills if they are practically unopposed. In such Bills no questions of general policy are involved, and they are merely introduced as public Bills to save the cost to the locality of promoting them as private Bills. I am not aware of any objection to the re-introduction of the Bill next Session, but the conditions I have laid down must be held to apply to this and similar cases, and I cannot promise to find Parliamentary time for Measures of this description.

BIMETALLISM.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to a Resolution passed unanimously at a public lecture in the Dublin Trades Council Hall, in which they deplore the evils arising from the instability of the par of exchange, and call upon the Government to carry out the House of Commons Resolution of 17th March 1896 by returning to the system of international bimetallism; and whether the Government intend to take any measures to promote an international conference upon the subject?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I am not aware that I can add anything to what I said in March of last Session, when I stated that I knew no circumstances which would induce me to suppose that anything would be gained by the initiative being taken in this matter by Her Majesty's Government.

ENLISTMENT REGULATIONS.

Captain PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to its being impossible to have the Debate on the system of enlistment in the British Army, for which the first place had been obtained in the ballot for to-morrow, and in view of the close connection which this question bears to the health of the troops in India, on which subject a Report of the Departmental Committee and a Memorandum of the Secretary of State for India has recently been issued, the Government will be prepared to give a day for the discussion of a matter of such urgent public importance after the Easter recess?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I doubt whether a discussion on the second of the topics mentioned in the Question would be relevant to a Debate upon the first; nor do I know that any circumstance has yet been brought to my knowledge that would induce me to believe that it was necessary or desirable to interrupt the general course of public business in this House for the purpose of promoting a discussion either upon the one or the other.

VENEZUELAN BOUNDARIES.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the proposed Treaty on the Venezuelan Boundaries has been agreed to by the United States Government; and, if not, what position is the question in at present; and, what further action does Her Majesty's Government intend to take in the matter?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The Treaty between Great Britain and Venezuela was signed on February 2. Its main provisions had been previously discussed and agreed upon by the Government of the United States. It has been recently confirmed by the Venezuelan Congress, and the exchange of the ratification will shortly be effected.

SCHOOL INSPECTORS (SCOTLAND).

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked whether the Lord Advocate would consent to the following Motion standing in his name:—

> "Copy or extracts of recent correspondence between the Sub-Inspectors of Schools in Scotland and the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland on the subject of appointments to the office of Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools."

***The LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): I am afraid that I cannot agree to the Motion of my hon. Friend. It is not in accordance with the usual official custom to give such correspondence; but we shall be glad to give him any information on the subject dealt with in the letters if he will apply for it privately.

SWINE FEVER (ESSEX).

MR. J. ROUND (Essex, Harwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can see his way to relax the existing restrictions in the County of Essex, which were imposed by the Board in consequence of outbreaks of swine fever last year?

*MR. LONG: I am happy to say that a considerable improvement in the position as regards swine fever in the North-East of Essex has taken place, and although it can hardly be hoped that the disease has been entirely extinguished, I think that the time has come when some modification of the existing regulations can safely be allowed. An Order has therefore been issued, withdrawing the severe restrictions of the Infected Areas Order, as from the 17th inst., and substituting the milder precautions of the Suspected Zones Order, a Measure which will give substantial relief to owners of pigs in the district.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY (SIR RICHARD MARTIN'S REPORT).

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now tell us when he will produce the Report of Sir Richard Martin. I understand it has already been presented to the Committee on South Africa, because I see a reference to it in the newspapers.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Report of Sir Richard Martin has been produced and laid before the Committee on South Africa in accordance with a promise I gave to some of the Members. I think it is rather unusual to produce prematurely Papers which form part of the material on which a Committee of this kind has to decide, but if my right hon. Friend desires that the matter should be further considered, I shall be glad to do so. Meanwhile I may add that the representatives of the Chartered Company have complained of some statements in Sir Richard Martin's Report which they assert to be inaccurate, and they have asked me to present a counter-statement as soon as they hear from their authorities, and, further, they ask that their statement should be presented at the same time as that of Sir Richard Martin. That, I think, is a fair request, and, even if the Report is laid on the Table, I think it desirable to wait until the reply of the Chartered Company can be presented at the same time.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

*MR. E. BAINBRIDGE (Lincoln, Gainsborough) asked the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which he had given him private notice—what reply to the Question marked (b) in paragraph 4 of the Questions addressed to the managers of Voluntary Schools last Friday (and which requests them to state why a school is necessitous), would enable them to get relief? [*Laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am glad the hon. Member has had an opportunity of explaining his Question, because it was only five minutes ago that the enigmatic utterance was placed in my hand. I find nothing at all bearing on the Question, and I was hopelessly puzzled as to what was the information desired. If the hon. Member will put the Question on the Paper during the holidays I will make full investigation. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. BAINBRIDGE: The right hon. Gentleman is referring to one Paper, and my Question refers to another.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right right hon. Gentleman has said that he is not in a position to answer the Question.

MR. J. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) asked whether there would be laid before Parliament the circular of the Education Department to managers of Voluntary Schools and the accompanying Minute in reference to the carrying out of the provisions of the Voluntary Schools Act.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I imagine that there will be no objection, but I must inquire of the Department to find out.

CAPE COLONY (VAAL DRIFTS).

MR. J. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) asked whether the Papers as to the closing of the Vaal drifts by the Government of the South African Republic in October 1895, were about to be laid before the Cape Legislature, and whether he would lay similar correspondence on the Table of the House.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, I have an intimation from the Government of Cape Colony to the effect that they desire to lay these Papers on the Table, and they have asked our assent, which we have readily accorded; and in these circumstances I propose to lay the Papers on the Table of this House.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) asked whether a week's notice would be given before the Committee stage of this Bill was taken?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Yes, I think it will be possible; but the hon. Gentleman should consult my hon. Friend in charge of the Bill. I will let him know in the course of the evening.

MOTIONS.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES' JURISDICTION (SCOTLAND).

Bill to extend the Jurisdiction of Stipendiary Magistrates in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday 26th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 202.]

BURIAL GROUNDS LOANS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to extend the period of Repayment of Loans for Burial Grounds in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday 26th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 203.]

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

CRETE.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY moved,

"That this House at its rising do Adjourn till Monday, April 26; that the Government business as far as and including the Order for the Committee on the Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill may be entered upon this night at any hour, though opposed, and be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House; and that, as soon as such business is disposed of, Mr. Speaker do Adjourn the House without question put."

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said that on the eve of an Adjournment for the Easter vacation, somewhat longer than it had been of recent years, some attention ought to be called to the fact that this year it was unfortunately not unlikely that events of importance concerning the policy of the Government might occur in the course of the vacation. A few weeks ago—even a few days ago—there appeared to be some prospect that the House might have an opportunity to Debate the policy of Her Majesty's Government in respect to Crete. But about ten days ago it became clear that the Government did not intend to propose any vote of money on which the movements of British troops in Crete might be discussed, and the refusal of the Leader of the House to give a day for the Motion down last week in the name of the Leader of the Opposition made it clear that no other opportunity for discussion was to be afforded to the House. The grounds which were given by the Leader of the House for refusing time to consider that Motion were, he thought, unusual. In the period between 1877 and 1880 a considerable number of Motions made by the Opposition were treated as Votes of Censure, and time was given to discuss them as such by the Government of the day. Half of those Motions were of a character similar to the Motion of his right hon. Friend—[*cheers*]—and some of them at least involved a Censure far less direct, far more hypothetical, than was the case with his right hon. Friend's Motion. [*Cheers.*] That was notably the case with regard to the famous Resolutions of Mr. Gladstone on the Eastern question. Those Resolutions were put down by an illustrious private Member without the support of his Leader; they were modified, and ultimately obtained the assent of the Leader of the Opposition; but the majority of the five Resolutions were not couched in terms of direct Censure on the Government. The Resolution on which the Debate of four nights and the Division took place contained no Censure at all directed against the Government, but it indicated a counter-policy, and if it had been adopted by the House the result would have entailed loss of office on Ministers. It was therefore treated as a Vote of Censure. The Resolutions were rejected by an overwhelming majority. It was said that the Liberal Party was not united on this question. He believed that the Liberal Party was absolutely united in the House in support of the Motion of which notice had been given by his right hon. Friend, and he believed that, without any exception, its Members would be found supporting it. [*Ironical laughter.*] The Leader of the House declared that the Motion was in some degree a hypothetical Motion regarding the future. If, however, Motions with regard to foreign affairs were not inevitably to be too late, and to be of no influence on the policy of the country, they must be in some sense hypothetical and have regard to the future. He remembered a Vote of Censure of which private notice was given which was couched in the same terms as regarded hypothesis and the future as the Motion of his right hon. Friend. It was a Motion which made it impossible that the Government of the day should take a particular course with regard to Zebehr Pasha and the Soudan. There was no difference of opinion between the two sides with regard to the history of the agent whom they proposed to employ; but the question was whether, in the circumstances of the moment, it was desirable to employ him. Before a decision had been come to on the question, Mr. Forster gave notice of a Motion in the same terms as the Motion of his right hon. Friend. The Opposition believed that they had behind them on this question the opinion of the majority of the nation. [*Cheers and derisive laughter.*] He undoubtedly believed that. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Members could only trust to the communications they received from various parts of the country, and he believed that never had so many Conservatives and Liberal Unionists cut themselves adrift from party ties as on this question. The Leader of the House had said that the forces of the Crown were being used in Crete for the purpose only of protecting the Mussulman minority, and that the purpose of the blockade of the mainland was simply the maintenance of peace. If that were a correct description of the use to which the forces of the Crown were being put, but little objection would be raised by the Opposition; but how could this policy pacify the interior of Crete? At best it would be a policy of "patching up," and would not solve the Cretan question. As to the blockade, it might result in upsetting the Greek Kingdom and rendering the continued presence of Greek troops on the frontier impossible; but would it result in restoring order in Crete? It had been shown that it was the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and possibly of some others, that there should be an immediate withdrawal of Turkish troops from Crete, but it appeared that some of the partners in the Concert of Europe were not so willing to bring that about. There were constant interchanges of views between the capitals of Europe as to the means which ought to be adopted to bring it about, and, in the present state of Europe and the Greek frontier, this was a difficult business which was undoubtedly rendered more difficult by the absence of the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. They knew that when the Government first came into office the Armenian question went to sleep while the Prime Minister was at Dieppe in the autumn of 1895. The country did not even know whether the Concert of Europe was in the least united. For all it knew, there might be an almost insuperable difference of opinion among the various Powers. Was the policy of Germany and Russia, for example, the same as our own? ["Hear, hear!"] The policy of Her Majesty's Government was a policy of autonomy in Crete as opposed to the very clear and direct policy of union with Greece. That was, no doubt, an honest policy on their part, but was it an equally honest policy on the part of Germany and Russia? These Powers had not shown such friendliness towards the Greek Democracy, or the patriotic Prince who presided over the destinies of Greece, as to render it indisputable that that was an honest policy on their part. The Leader of the House had taunted the Opposition for opposing the policy of autonomy, or policy of Home Rule for Crete as he had called it. They had not, however, opposed a policy of Home Rule for Crete as they understood Home Rule. What they meant by Home Rule was union under a

Crown to which the people were either already friendly or to which they would be made friendly by the policy of autonomy in the sense of Home Rule. The autonomy which he regarded with suspicion was the autonomy which he feared Russia or Germany had in view when talking of the autonomy of Crete under Turkish rule. It was a curious fact that both the Sultan of Turkey and the King of Greece held the same language with regard to the circumstances which had brought their armies face to face. They said:—

> "We were carrying on negotiations between ourselves with reference to the future of Crete, and we were on the point of arriving at a determination, and now we are brought to the verge of war by the action of the Powers and the Concert of Europe."

The Government believed that the Cretans had always asked for autonomy, but having examined closely the history of Crete since 1826 he had failed to find that the Cretans had ever asked for autonomy as distinguished from union with Greece. In the war of independence the Cretans asked for union with their brethren on the mainland, and at the time of the treaty of 1827 the islands of Greece therein mentioned were thought by the Whig Party to include Crete. In 1828 the Cretans were blockaded by the fleets of England and France, the object being to protect them against the Turks. In 1830 the Cretans had risen again, and the following Motion was proposed in the House of Lords:—

> "That no plan for the pacification of Greece can be approved as advantageous or honourable to His Majesty's Crown which does not give to that country a territory sufficient to maintain a national defence."

Lord Holland, speaking on this Motion, said:—

> "The day will come when we shall rue the errors of which our Government have been guilty; . . . . when our neglect of the opportunity of adding Candia to the territories of Greece will reflect upon ourselves with a force of which no man can see the remote consequences. However wise, however prudent the head of the Greek Government may be, he must either connive at his own subjects carrying on clandestine intercourse with the insurgents in Candia, or he must openly espouse the cause of their oppressed brethren. If such be his determination, what, then, will be the consequence? A new war, which may embroil all the Powers of Europe."

Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston expressed similar views, and Sir James Mackintosh said:—

> "Candia is essential to the safety of Greece and cannot be excluded from its territory without endangering the existence of the new State."

Grattan called attention to the same subject on June 8, and O'Connell expressed the admiration that he felt for Prince Leopold on account of his refusal of the Crown of Greece upon the ground that Crete was not included. From 1827 to 1830 the Cretans were fighting for union with Greece, and in the insurrection of 1841 the same motive was apparent. Then the Turks met the great rising in 1866 by an offer of full autonomy, and that offer was unanimously declined by the Cretan insurgents, on the ground that they were fighting for independence and union with Greece. In 1878 they again put forward the same pretensions, which were voiced by their delegates at the Congress of Berlin. France and Italy took note of their declaration, but suddenly there came the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and a compromise was agreed to by the Powers. In 1879 this matter was taken up in this country by a large number of persons, whose votes prevailed at the election in 1880. In 1879 Lord Rosebery and Lord Lansdowne put their names to a declaration that the possession of Crete was within the legitimate aspirations of the Greek people, and that the interests of peace required the annexation of the island to Greece. Now they never should have been able to carry out the compromise of 1882 if they had blindly followed the Concert, and if they had not gone forward by themselves. [*Cheers.*] It was that fact, and that fact alone, which carried out the compromise of 1882. The Concert failed as to the Armenians; they were out of reach; but as regarded the other two cases it succeeded. He now came to 1886. He was not concerned with defending that Government, because he was not a Member of it, but the right hon. Gentleman attacked it. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: "I did not attack it!"] There was a taunt across the Table. What was the history of the blockade of 1886? The Collective Note to Greece to demobilise her army and withdraw from the frontier was signed, not by Gentlemen on that side of the House, but by Lord Salisbury, in January 1886—["hear, hear!"]—and on the 26th of that month his right hon. Friend the present Secretary for the Colonies gave notice of his intention to oppose that policy. [*Laughter.*] Undoubtedly there was a considerable opposition to that policy, which was only obscured by the overwhelming importance of the Home Rule question, and which was defended on the ground of the continuity of their foreign policy. He was not in favour of the continuity theory, because it meant the withdrawal from the people of this country of the opportunity of expressing by their votes any views as to foreign affairs. ["Hear, hear!"] The Liberal Party were involved in the coercion of Greece in the name of peace entirely in consequence of this doctrine of continuity. What was the history of coercion in the present case? The Powers had not suddenly come together. They had been at the work for two years and a-half, and, having failed to coerce Turkey, they seemed to have been driven into the coercion of Greece. Then they were told that if they expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of the Concert, if they wished to take their own line, they should have the courage of their opinions. Did the Powers act together with regard to Armenia? Was it not stated that Russia protested against the coercion of Turkey, and went so far as to say that she would not allow it? Lord Salisbury was suddenly stirred out of his very slow and dragging action on this Cretan question, which resembled his action with regard to the Armenian question—["hear, hear!"]—by the dispatch of Greek troops and the appearance of Prince George of Greece. These were the events which forced the hands of the Powers, and, instead of being unwise, they were necessary for the existence of the Cretan people. ["Hear, hear!"] They would never be able to rob the Cretans of that freedom which that very action of Greece gave to them. The Liberal Party had been taunted with using the phrase "the holy alliance," and with objecting to the damping down in the name of peace of Cretan liberty. There was once a holy alliance which was just what they described the Concert of Europe to be at the present time. Even Lord Castlereagh would not go into it. He meant the holy alliance as it existed before Laybach, and especially in 1815-1817. They had heard the Prime Minister describe what had taken place as filibustering; but what was the action of Lord Palmerston as to Sicily? He prevented the other Powers from interfering with what would now be called filibustering. Nothing could equal the imbecility and helplessness which the Great Powers had shown in dealing with Crete, and which they would have continued to show had not the King of Greece by his action forced their hands. [*Opposition cheers.*]

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport) who was received with Ministerial cheers: The right hon. Baronet has made a speech which has contained a great deal of historical knowledge and research; but much of his history, and more particularly that which related to recent events, I cannot myself accept. I shall venture in one or two respects to correct him; but I hope he will excuse me for saying that really the greater part of his interesting speech was not very material to the issue now before the House. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and Ministerial cheers.*] I do not say that with any idea of disrespect to the right hon. Baronet; but I hope the House will excuse me if I at any rate try to confine what I have to say within the somewhat narrow limits imposed upon us by the exigencies of the present moment. There is one complaint that I think cannot be made in reference to this Cretan question. No one can complain that there has been any lack of opportunity for criticising the conduct of the Government on the one hand or for defending it on the other during the past two months. ["Hear, hear!"] I have been refreshing my Parliamentary memory, and I find that in the last two months we have had the adjournment of the House moved three times on this question of Crete; we have had two discussions in Committee of Supply; there have been important speeches made in another place by the Secretary of State; and although it is true—as the right hon. Baronet rather unjustly taunted us—that we have not had our Vote of Censure, and although we have not yet persuaded the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition to repeat in this House that martial oration that we so much admired at Norwich—[*laughter and cheers*]—it is just possible that that is a pleasure that lies before us this afternoon. [*Ministerial cheers and laughter.*] In any case it is true that we have had in the space of less than two months no fewer than six Debates on this question in the House of Commons; and if I look at what has passed in foreign countries during the same time, I find that in the French Chamber there have been only two such Debates, and in the Parliaments of Austria, Italy, and Germany, there has only been one in each case; so that if the appetite for political information in this country is as much greater than it is on the Continent as is often claimed, so also has it had abundant opportunity for satisfaction. ["Hear, hear!"] A few days ago the Leader of the Opposition, in anticipating the Debate of this afternoon, before we separate for the recess, asked that some statement should be made on behalf of the Government of their case. I confess I should have thought that our statement of policy in regard to Crete had been made so frequently as to become tedious by virtue of recapitulation; and I shall not recapitulate it at any length this afternoon. Perhaps, however, I may be permitted briefly to summarise it, and in so doing I will also deal with one or two points stated by the right hon. Baronet. I first take the question of autonomy. The right hon. Baronet complained once more that no clear or definite definition had been given of that word. If we look to the proclamation that was issued to the people of Crete we find it contains this definition, which to my mind is perfectly clear and satisfactory—that it is to imply "freedom from all control of the Porte in internal affairs." Then the right hon. Baronet says,

> "This may be your policy, and I give you all credit for honesty; but I cannot speak similarly of the other Powers;"

and he seems to harbour dark suspicions that this policy of autonomy upon which the Great Powers have conjointly and with absolute sincerity embarked is one that is put forward by ourselves alone, and from which certain of our allies are keeping in the background. I can with truth say there is no ground whatever for those suspicions. [*Ministerial cheers.*] There is no reason to suppose that the autonomy which this Government desires to make definite, absolute, ample, and clear is looked at from any other point of view by the other Powers. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Then the right hon. Gentleman says the Powers have interfered to prevent an arrangement being arrived at between the Sultan of Turkey and the King of Greece. Nothing has astonished me more in the history of the past few weeks than the extraordinary amount of information, entirely unconfirmed by what we know, which appears to be in the possession of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. It may be that those negotiations have taken place; but neither we nor the other Powers know anything about them, so that this particular charge that an arrangement has been prevented by the other Powers cannot be sustained. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Of course, the realisation of this autonomy and the promulgation of a new Constitution for Crete must depend, in the first place, upon the restoration of order in the island. Anyone that reads the papers must see that there are several obstacles to the restoration of order. Some of these are inherent in the nature of the present circumstances, but are, I think, capable of modification. Among these may be counted the presence of the Turkish troops in the island to which so much attention has been drawn, about which the views of Her Majesty's Government are very well known, and the importance of dealing with which we have never ceased to press upon our allies. Then there are other obstacles which may, I think, rather be called artificial than inherent in this character. Among those is the presence of the Greek troops in the island. If we look back to the answer made by the Greek Government to one of the Notes of the Powers, we find they defended the dispatch of Greek troops to Crete as being justified by the dictates of humanity. I for one have no desire to dispute that explanation; but I do not think that any one can contend that the dictates of humanity are being served by the continued presence of the Greek troops in the island. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Here are these Greek troops acting in violation of the expressed desires of the Powers—["hear, hear!"]—preventing that autonomy being given to the island which has been promised, and practically claiming the right to annex the island of

Crete to Greece. I have often said before that I really believe the retirement of the Greek troops from Crete would open wide the door which would lead almost immediately to a pacific settlement of this question; and I have always regretted very much that hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentleman opposite have not exercised that influence they are said to possess with the Greek Government in that direction. [*Cheers and laughter.*] It is because those Greeks have not been withdrawn that, as the House knows, a blockade of the coast of Crete has been maintained by the Admirals of the allied fleets since March 21, and simultaneously the Powers have with contingents occupied the principal ports on the coast, and have placed under their protection many thousands of helpless and defenceless persons of both sexes and all ages, who, but for that humane protection from the Powers, must have suffered terribly. [*Cheers.*] They have further done very good work—I am making these points in answer to the contention of the right hon. Baronet, that the action of the Powers throughout has been characterised by helplessness and imbecility—they have done inestimable work in relieving the people and in saving thousands of lives. But it may be said that there has been a great deal of fighting between the insurgents and the forces of the Powers. It is unfortunately the case that the insurgents, in face of the reiterated and explicit warnings that have been addressed to them and have reached them, as we know, from the Admirals, have persisted in their endeavours to starve out the Turkish garrisons in the outlying posts; to get command of those outposts that command the towns where are stationed the contingents of the forces of the Powers; to cut off the water supply of the towns; and even to engage in hostilities with the European officers and troops. With all that we are familiar. But I am glad to say that within the last few days the situation in the island does appear to be a little quieter. The humane and pacific mission of the Admirals is beginning to be understood. They have succeeded in restraining the Turkish troops from disorder and excesses, and the last step they took in the disarmament of the irregulars, or so-called Bashi-Bazouks, has had a very beneficial effect on the restoration and maintenance of order. In the meantime, as hon. Gentlemen opposite know very well, active discussions have been going on and are proceeding at this moment between the Powers as to the appointment of a governor, the institution of a Militia for the future preservation of order in the island, and as to the basis of the autonomous constitution which has been promised. Of course, while these negotiations are proceeding it would be most improper on my part, and no one in the House would ask me to enter into that; but I hope I have succeeded in giving, at any rate, in concise and accurate outline a résumé of what our policy has been and is in regard to Crete. I turn now for a moment to the mainland and the policy which the Government are pursuing in that direction. The Government have strained every nerve to prevent the outbreak of war, which they can only regard as calamitous to both Greece and Turkey, and as constituting a very grave menace to the peace of Europe. ["Hear, hear!"] They have shown the utmost forbearance in regard to the susceptibilities and sentiments of all concerned, and they have done everything in their power to prevent anything which might precipitate the outbreak of war. As the Leader of the House informed the House recently, Her Majesty's Government have declared their willingness in the last resort to join the other Powers of Europe, solely for the maintenance of peace, in carrying out that blockade, which, as we know, was enforced 11 years ago by right hon. Gentlement opposite—[*cheers*]—and in order to remove the necessity for any such operation, and to obviate the incentive to war which must inevitably arise from the assembling of these masses of men on the frontier, we have also taken part, as my right hon. Friend told the House last week, in a joint representation at Constantinople and at Athens, that the aggressor, whoever he may be, shall not be allowed to profit by his victory. [*Cheers.*] It is true that an unfortunate event happened upon the frontier three or four days ago; but the information we have received leads us to think that this was an entirely unauthorised raid, and that it was not participated in by any of the Greek regulars. It has also been disavowed by the Greek Government; while, on the other hand, the Government of Turkey has said that if these instances of provocation are not repeated they are not anxious to find in this particular one, as they might have done had they so chosen, a *casus belli.* [*Cheers.*] This is a brief résumé of the position of the Government in regard to the island and the mainland. I now come to another point. We have taken all these steps, not in isolation, but in conjunction with the other Powers, who are equally animated with a desire for peace. Of course, as the hon. Baronet said, there must be in a matter of this kind some difference of opinion; of course in any action resulting from these combined forces there must be a certain amount of give and take. Compromise is the very essence of any such combination, and every Power cannot carry its own particular will or way; but whatever these differences of detail may have been on the broad principles to be followed there has been no difference whatever between the Powers, and on this basis the Concert remains quite unimpaired. Within the walls of the Concert this country has undoubtedly used its influence in the interests of moderation and conciliation. [" Hear, hear! "] It has taken such steps as might, without loss of dignity to any of the parties concerned, lead to a pacific settlement of this question. It has been disposed to concede the utmost latitude to any disposition or suggestion that makes for the cause of peace, and has allowed every opportunity—opportunities I am glad to say not yet exhausted—for affording negotiations on this matter. Nevertheless the Concert is very much denounced, and the right hon. Baronet has joined in this popular declamation against these proceedings. On one point I must confess I think he did a grave injustice both to the Concert and to historical facts; he said the Concert had wholly failed to coerce Turkey on the question of Armenia. [*Opposition cheers.*] If I may be allowed to remind him, he is confusing two entirely different sets of circumstances. When Lord Salisbury came into office the Concert of Europe did not exist; there was a combination of three Powers which had been initiated, for many reasons by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. A particular situation having occurred in Armenia the Powers who had consular representatives there joined together to deal with it, and in this way the co-operation of certain Powers had been instituted. It was Lord Salisbury's policy, and his successful policy, to replace that combination, however justifiable, by the entire Concert of Europe. The difference between a concert and a combination is this; a concert means the whole of the six Powers, and a combination means a smaller number. [*Opposition laughter.*] I do not know whether my definition is very grammatical, but it is at any rate correct. [" Hear, hear! "] What is even more curious still is that in reconstituting the Concert of Europe, and in acting with it ever since, strange as it may appear, we have really been acting on the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. I am, if I may say so, a most devoted and attentive student of his speeches, and in the course of last autumn I derived great consolation from what he said about Armenia. He made a speech on October 6, 1896, in his constituency in Wales, and this is what he said:—

> " What we want is that which used to be called an *entente cordiale* with foreign Powers, a friendly disposition which accommodates itself to the circumstances of the times as they present themselves, a little more international courtesy. I dare say I shall be told to-morrow that this is a poor-spirited policy by those who pride themselves on splendid isolation." [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] "I confess that I am not an admirer of the splendid isolation which results in a humiliating impotence. I prefer a cordial, good understanding; a neighbourly spirit ministers to the happiness of mankind."

Then a little later on he said:—

> " What should be our policy if we want to strengthen the hands of the Government? Let us give them an assurance that in cultivating the friendship of other Powers "—[*cheers*]—" they will have the cordial and steadfast support of national sentiment."

[*Ministerial cheers.*] Now we have been told this afternoon that national sentiment is represented exclusively on the opposite side of the House, and therefore really the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition ought to be the last person to object to us if we show that amount of deference to him which is involved in having adopted in the spring of this year the policy which he urged upon us in the autumn of last year. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I will take one other point in regard to what the right hon. Gentleman has said; he talked about the imbecility and helplessness of the Concert. Has the Concert even in this Cretan question been imbecile or helpless? During the last two months it has saved Europe from war. Is that no great achievement? From the start of this Cretan affair it has been the action of the Concert, and of the Concert alone, which has prevented Turkey from declaring war, and which has saved Crete from consequences much graver than any of those it has undergone. Nobody in this House can deny that, whatever may have been the motives of the action of Greece, that action was of a provocative character. Without declaring war, the Greeks assumed the rights of a belligerent without the responsibilities. They invaded an island belonging to another Power, they fired on Turkish vessels, attacked Turkish troops, and have since been in occupation of the island, and have massed large bodies of men, if not with the intention of making war, at any rate with the obvious intention of threatening war on the northern frontier of Greece. Suppose that we had adopted the advice of the right hon. Baronet. If there had been no Concert, or we had receded from the Concert, and had failed to put pressure on Turkey, what would have happened? Do you mean to say that the Turks would not have sent reinforcements to Crete, and would not 12,000 Turkish troops in this internecine warfare have carried havoc and extermination throughout that island, and on the northern frontier of Thessaly would not the Turkish forces, which are understood to be largely superior both in numbers and equipment, have crossed the frontier long ago, if the pressure of the Powers had not prevented that? ["Hear, hear!"] The Powers have done their best, and I think they have succeeded in localising the disturbance. In the case of Crete they have localised it by blockading that island rather than the Greek mainland, and by assuming responsibility for the island, and in the case of the frontier they have tried to localise the disturbance there by making the joint declaration that the aggressor will in neither case be allowed to profit by his victory. I have little more to say; but there is one argument that I should like to meet. It is said, your intentions may be excellent, but, oh! how dilatory and slow you are in executing them. Is that very remarkable? When you take the case of Crete, and remember that, not for generations, but for centuries, that island has been torn by internecine warfare, and that at the present moment there is this source of friction and misunderstanding in the conflicting and overlapping jurisdictions of the Admirals in the seaports, the Turks in the garrisons, the insurgents in the interior, and Colonel Vassos and the Greeks in his mountain fastness, can any sensible man expect pacification to be restored at once? I will take the really interesting and parallel case of Samos, which is habitually held out to us as a model which we ought to set before us. That was a State which was long part of the Turkish Empire, with a population, as in this case, mainly Greek, and though still remaining under the suzerainty of the Sultan it has acquired a constitution of an independent and satisfactory character. What happened in Samos? After the war of Greek independence in 1827, when the Powers declared that Samos should not be taken from Turkey, but should possess an autonomous constitution of its own, there was continuous fighting from 1827 to 1836. There were Collective Notes, blockades, incursions of Greek volunteers, Colonel Vassosses turning up by the score—almost every incident of the present situation was reproduced on a miniature scale at that time. And, although a constitution was given to Samos in 1832, it was not until 1850, after 23 years' fighting, disorder, and trouble, that the island settled down and accepted that autonomous constitution under which it has ever since lived. [*Opposition cheers.*] My desire is to point out that, if you now quote Samos as an instance, we ought to remember that the present constitution was not given to Samos without very many of those disorders which we are now combating.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): In Samos they were fighting against Turkish soldiers.

MR. CURZON: I do not think so. I presume that everybody in this House is really agreed that the objects which the Government have set before themselves are the correct objects. [*Opposition cries of* "No!"] I am taking the objects as defined by my right hon. Friend behind me—the peace of Europe and the liberation of Crete. [*Ministerial cheers.*] There is nobody in this House who would dispute that those are objects which any

Government ought to set before themselves. The question seems to me largely to turn on whether you ought to pursue that policy by yourselves or in Concert with the other Powers. When the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition says in a speech in the country that he and his Party have done with the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and also says that integrity is the basis of the European Concert, it would seem—and I dare say he would not deny it—that that speech involves a disavowal and repudiation of the policy of the Concert; and when he moved the other day in this House for an Address to the Crown praying that the forces of the Crown might not be used against Crete or Greece—in other words that Great Britain should not pledge herself in advance as to the steps she might be called upon to take in assisting to carry out the policy of the Powers—what was that but tying the hands of the British Government and disrupting and disintegrating the Concert of Europe? If that is the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, instead of his calling upon us for a statement of our policy, which we have so often given from these Benches, ought we not to have some statement of policy from him? Either the Opposition have an alternative policy or they have not; if they have an alternative policy let us hear it in the House of Commons. [*Loud cheers.*] If they have not an alternative policy then let them cease to embarrass and hamper the Government by their attacks. There is only one reason why I feel glad that the Vote of Censure was not moved. Of course, if a Vote of Censure had been moved we should have had an overwhelming majority and should have extracted from that the consolation which large majorities never fail to give. But, after all, that is a cheap consolation; surely if no Vote of Censure is moved we are justified in inferring that there is a great body of sentiment, even on the opposite side of the House, that is in sympathy with our policy. ["Hear, hear!"] For my own part I think as long as we remain in the Concert of Europe, the power for good and the efficacy of this country is likely to be increased by the consciousness which will prevail abroad that we have behind us not merely a Party majority, but a large majority of the people of the country. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

*Sir WILLLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.), who rose amidst loud Opposition cheers: Sir, although the right hon. Gentleman has declined the challenge I offered—[*Ministerial laughter and cheers*]—I shall not decline his challenge to-night. [*Opposition cheers.*] I regretted, and still regret, that the House is to discuss matters of grave importance with reference to the future policy of this country in the presence of the great question which is upon us, the Eastern Question, upon a Motion of Adjournment. I am of opinion that that ought to have been discussed on a definite issue. [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition counter cheers.*] Yes, Sir, we presented a definite issue—[*Ministerial cries of* "No!"]—and the right hon. Gentleman in his closing sentences admitted it. He said that the Motion I put on the Paper called in question the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, which was the basis of the Concert of Europe. That is the issue that we have raised and intend to raise. The Leader of the House complained that this Motion was not sufficiently censorious.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: No, I did not.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes, the right hon. Gentleman, I think, is a little bit unreasonable and a little difficult to satisfy. If that Motion had been carried it would have turned out the Government. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.*] What more does he want? If it had been carried it would have put an end to the present Administration. And he says it is not a sufficiently adverse Motion! I have seen it absurdly stated that its terms were "unconstitutional." Why, of course, it would have been unconstitutional if the Government had remained in power, because it would have restrained their hands. But if it had displaced that Government, and put in office a Government in accordance with the principles of the Resolution—[*Ministerial laughter*]—it would have been perfectly constitutional. Oh, but you say it would not have been carried. Very well, why did you not negative it? Why did you not substitute for it a Vote of Confidence. You might have done that if you pleased. The issue you would not face here or in the country was, whether the forces of the Crown were to be employed against Greece or not. That was the issue we presented to the House. I entirely agree with what my right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean said to-night. I have had the same Parliamentary experience he has had. We entered the House at the same time, and this I will venture to say, as Lord Kimberley said the other day, that in his experience no Government has ever declined to meet such a Motion as that, or shrunk from such an issue when presented to it. In the great contests in which we were engaged—aye, and in which many Members on that Bench were engaged—from 1878 to 1880, Motions far less adverse were brought forward, and the Government of that day, under the lead of Mr. Disraeli, never thought of shrinking from Motions of this kind when brought forward on the responsibility of the Opposition. The Government has declined to meet the Motion. That is their affair. But what it was our business to do was to put on record on the journals of the House the judgment and the opinion of the Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House, representing, as they believe they do, in that respect, the united Liberal Party—[*Ministerial laughter and Opposition cheers*]—I will venture to say that on this subject the Liberal Party are a good deal more united than the Party opposite, either here or elsewhere. We have put on record, at all events, the principles which we are prepared to maintain. We have complained that we have never succeeded in obtaining from the Government an explanation of the principles upon which they are proceeding. We have had an interesting and able speech from the Under Secretary to-night, but he has never gone into the principles which lie at the root of the matter. He has given us a good deal of interesting detail upon minor matters, but he has never encountered the questions which we have put and which I will repeat to-night, and upon which we have never obtained any kind of answer from the Government. It is true there have been discussions here. Yes, on particular incidents, not on the principles of the policy which the Government are pursuing. There have been explanations in the French and Italian Chambers, and there have been certain spasmodic and fragmentary—what shall I call them?—not discussions or declarations—in the House of Lords. But the right hon. Gentleman says, "Oh, yes. We have explained our principles. We say they are "liberty for Crete and peace for Europe.'" [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yes, Sir. But what sort of liberty for Crete? I am going to ask that. Is it the liberty for Crete that the Cretan people desire? [*Opposition cheers.*] That is the question. These vague and general phrases are no explanation of the policy of the Government. What do you mean by liberty for Crete, and how, and with what prospects, are you providing for the peace of Europe? It is not vague phrases of this kind that we want, but something like reasonable explanation of the methods by which you are pursuing the objects at which you profess to aim. Then, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman says we have had explanations here. But he does not do himself justice. Really, the explanations we have had from the right hon. Gentleman have not been in the House of Commons. They have been at smoking reunions—[*Opposition laughter*]—and on platforms in the country. I am going to ask in the House of Commons some questions on these declarations which have not been made here. We have had abusive speeches against Greece delivered at Nottingham by one Cabinet Minister.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): What abuse?

*SIR W. HARCOURT: The other day a Member of the Cabinet said the Greeks were the most intriguing people in the world. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I did not say that. If the right hon. Gentleman quotes me, I hope he will quote me accurately. I said that of all the Eastern Christians the Greeks had developed the least the material prosperity of their country since they had had free government, and that they had a remarkable aptitude for political intrigue and misrepresenting those to whom they were opposed. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT: We had a question put to the Home Secretary earlier in the evening as to what abusive language was, and if the words the noble Lord has just used represent his idea of complimentary language, we may be left to conjecture what are his conceptions of abuse. We have had what I hope I may, without offence, call a more conciliatory speech from another Member of the Government, at Leeds, with reference to the Greek Kingdom. I complain that speeches of this kind, which profess to give the policy of the Government, are not delivered in the House of Commons. It seems to me it is part of a scheme to disparage the authority of the House of Commons—[*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter*]—to teach the people of this country that the House of Commons is a place of small account, and that it is not a place in which great questions affecting the interests of the nation should be discussed. I regret it, because I am old-fashioned enough still to have respect for the Parliamentary traditions of this country. I regret that the Government have set themselves to work to prevent discussion in this House. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!" *and Opposition cheers.*] Yes; as no Government before has prevented it, and say:—"We will allow no discussion in this House upon a great question of foreign policy unless you couch it in the form of a Vote of Censure." I say that no such contention has ever been made by any Government in this country before. If we are not to discuss the policy of the Government here, we can discuss it elsewhere. I do not know whether it is extremely politic on the part of a Government with a great majority, and who derive most advantage from the system of Closure in the House of Commons. I should have thought it might have been useful to them here. However, at all events, on a Motion of Adjournment, we have a right of inquiry of the Government which I, for my part, propose to make use of to-night. We have questions to ask the Government as to what they are doing and what they have done. But whenever we ask a question of the Government, they tell us, as the right hon. Gentleman has told us to-night:—"Oh, it is the decision of the Concert of Europe. We do not argue whether it is right or wrong." The right hon. Gentleman says, "In a concert you must have give and take." Yes; but I want to know who are giving and who are taking. As far as I can see, all the giving is on the part of Her Majesty's Government. They tell us:—"The Concert of Europe has decided so and so. We do not tell you it is a thing we approve. We do not profess to defend it." Nobody can deny that is the line they took about the decision in the case of Armenia. But they say:—"The Concert of Europe has settled the matter. We accept it, we submit to it, and execute whatever the Concert has decided." That is a very serious position with reference to the condition of foreign affairs in Europe if all the British Government have to say is, "Whatever the six Powers decide by a majority, that is the policy of the British Government, and that is what the British Government are bound to do." For our part we do not accept that answer. We do not consider that their decision is conclusive, and we claim to investigate what that decision is, and what are the merits of it. We are told that the Concert of Europe is a magnificent conception, that it is a beneficent providence, which is to dispose of the destinies of the world. Well, the right hon. Gentleman has paid me the compliment to quote some observations of mine made last autumn. But they do not correspond to the present position at all. I was arguing at that time against what I considered to be an exceedingly mischievous practice in this House and out of this House of endeavouring to breed bad blood between the different nations of the world. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] That is the language I heard on those Benches about Russia, about Germany, and about France, and that language, I think, is most mischievous. [*Opposition cheers.*] But that is a very different thing from placing the foreign policy of this country in commission, and stating that, whatever is determined by a certain number of Powers, that England is bound to do. That is the policy against which I enter a protest. ["Hear, hear!"] We have been told that it is a federation of Europe and a legislature. That is an extraordinary and new doctrine. What becomes of the liberty of independent States if there is a federation which has a right to legislate for the world, and for all the States that do not belong to that federation? These are propositions which I absolutely challenge. ["Hear, hear!"] These are what I call the principles of foreign policy as to which we ought to have explanations. Upon this Concert of Europe the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary is perfectly dithyrambic—I do not mean here, but where he has expounded the true policy of Her Majesty's Government on platforms elsewhere. He has told us that the Concert of Europe is a jury which returns a verdict, and he says it is a "Cabinet of nations, and that the destinies of Europe are committed to its collective wisdom and collective responsibility." When he calls the Concert of Europe a Cabinet of nations, I suppose that he has derived the opinion of its sagacity, its unanimity, its decision, its dispatch, and its efficiency from that Cabinet which he represents in this House. This Concert, this Cabinet of the nations, is very much, I suppose, like the Concert of the present Cabinet of Great Britain. But the Cabinet of nations must be judged, like other Cabinets, by its action, and still more by its inaction. Let us see what has been the work of this Cabinet of nations up to this point. We have had some experience of it for the last 18 months. The first question that was committed to its charge and responsibility was the question of Armenia. What has it done with Armenia? In November, 1895, it is quite true that, as the right hon. Gentleman has just said, Lord Salisbury got together this Cabinet of nations, and he told us it had never been so harmonious, and never so determined to put an end to the horrors in Armenia. He assured us it was prepared to act to fulfil those pledges which the "legislature of Europe" had given for the protection of the people of Armenia. That was the assurance Lord Salisbury gave as to the action of the Cabinet of nations. Well, it did not act. [*Opposition cheers.*] We were told that this Cabinet of nations had determined that Armenia—which all the Powers at Berlin had promised to protect, which the British Government specially in the Cyprus Treaty, had promised to preserve—should be abandoned to its fate. This was the first work of the Concert of Europe. [*Opposition cheers.*] The reason they gave for this determination was a very remarkable one. They said that if the Turkish Government are not allowed to massacre the Armenians, all the Christian Powers will set to work to massacre one another. That is the actual ground which was alleged, and that is what they call preserving the peace of Europe. [*Opposition cheers.*] That was the deliberate conclusion of what the right hon. Gentleman calls "the collective wisdom of Europe"—these Powers who say they are such ardent worshippers of peace, who were collected together to preserve peace—and what is their argument in favour of peace? Why that "if you do not do what we propose, we shall make war upon one another." That is really the argument which lies at the bottom of these professions of peace on the part of the Concert of Europe. [*Opposition cheers.*] The Concert of Europe then came to the conclusion —I hope it was not a unanimous conclusion, and I do not believe it was as regards Her Majesty's Government—that Armenia was to be abandoned to its fate. [*Ministerial cries of* "No, no!" *and Opposition cheers.*] Has Armenia not been abandoned to its fate? [*Ministerial cries of* "No!" *and Opposition cheers.*] Is there any attempt made to stop those massacres at which Lord Salisbury said the world had turned pale? [An HON. MEMBER ON THE MINISTERIAL SIDE: "You had better ask Lord Rosebery!"] All that took place after the Concert of Europe was established, and while it professed to be in action, and thus we see the cause of humanity and the claims of freedom are sacrificed to the jealousies and selfish interests of the Powers, who declare that they will go to war if they are called upon to listen to those claims of humanity for which they appear to care so little, and to those claims of freedom for which they certainly care a good deal less. [*Cheers.*] That is the first-fruit of this Concert of Europe, of this Cabinet of nations to whom the destinies of the world have been committed. What is the result? All these Powers have failed to fulfil the pledges which they gave at Berlin, and the British Government, unwillingly I believe, has been obliged to violate the pledge it gave in the Anglo-Turkish Convention. I confess I do not feel disposed to speak disrespectfully of these thrones, dominations, and princedoms. But there are people who have ventured to rush in upon this matter. There is one eminent statesman whom I may venture to quote, because we all know that he knows everything better than everyone else. I need not say I refer to his Grace the Duke of Argyll. [*Laughter.*] This is what he ventures to say about the Concert of Europe:—

> "That the Powers should have consented even to allow their representatives to spend time in such attempts as these after the experience of half a century of the hopelessly bad faith, and of the cunning procrastination of the Porte, is indeed astonishing. As usual, we seem to have been the leaders in this farce. Our Foreign Office boasted from time to time that we had got all the Powers to act in line, which was indeed true. But what was the line? It was what is called, in the language of military drill, practising the goose step."

[*Laughter and cheers.*] That is not quite as poetical a description of the Concert of Europe as that given by the Under Secretary, but I venture to think it is, perhaps, a more accurate one. ["Hear, hear!"] Then we are told, "It is quite true that many thousands of Armenians have been massacred, but we have got great reforms in prospect for stopping them in the future." What has become of these reforms?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: They are being carried out.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: For weeks and months the Ambassadors have been discussing them at Constantinople—discussions which remind one of the history of what took place in Constantinople among the Christian Powers before that city fell into the hands of the Turks. The Ambassadors, we have been told, made a plan, and they have referred it to the Powers. Have the Powers accepted that plan? What have they done? Has it been presented? Has it been accepted? No, Sir; the only commentary upon these discussions among the Powers at Constantinople has been the recent massacre at Tokat. That is what the Concert of Europe up to this time has done for Armenia. ["Hear, hear!"] That is its efficiency; that is the ground of the confidence that we are asked to show towards it. ["Hear, hear!"] The next question committed to it was the settlement of the affairs of Crete. How have they settled those affairs? How did they begin? The collective wisdom of the Powers, as the Under Secretary calls it, devised a plan for reforming Crete. That plan proved so ineffective and so absurd that everybody has disavowed it; it has been withdrawn, and it never had any practical existence at all. What was that plan, and what have they been pursuing ever since? It was founded upon that integrity of the Ottoman Empire which was described by Lord Salisbury as backing the wrong horse. ["Hear, hear!"] All they have been doing in Crete has been backing the wrong horse and bombarding the wrong people. [*Opposition cheers.*] Then, Sir, in the midst of all this purposeless fumbling of the Great Powers came in the intervention of Greece, and the Greeks offered to Crete their liberties in the form in which, as my right hon. Friend has shown, she has always asked for it—in the form of annexation to Greece. [*Cheers.*] I said that there was a Member of the Cabinet who spoke in very different language of the Greeks from that which was assumed by the Secretary of State for India. This is what the Chief Secretary for Ireland said at Leeds the other day about Greece.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: He is not a Member of the Cabinet.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: There are so many members of the family in the Government that I am sure I may be pardoned for making the mistake. [*Opposition cries of* "Hear, hear!"] But whether he is in the Cabinet or not, this is what he said:—

> "I do not say that in the first instance the action of Greece in sending troops to Crete was not susceptible of some excuse. It might have been excused in view of the undoubtedly dilatory action of the Powers, and all of us could not help admiring, when we were condemning, the pluck which Greece showed upon that occasion."

[*Opposition cheers.*] I think that is much more worthy language than that of the Secretary for India, but I cannot excuse the Under Secretary, though he is not in the Cabinet either. The people of Crete, he said, "had always been troubled." They have been troubled, and they have been troublesome, I am happy to say, to some purpose now. They had been violating the law, he said, ever since the time of Minos. Well, we are not acquainted with the laws of

Minos, but if they were at all like the laws of the Sultan of Turkey, the Cretans did quite right to violate them. ["Hear, hear!"] For centuries the Cretans have been the most oppressed people, perhaps, in the world. Let anyone read the accounts of the cruelties and slaughters inflicted on thŏse people in 1866 and 1868. And yet the Under Secretary says, "the majority of the people, who are Christian Greeks, are perpetually warring against the minority, who are Mahomedan Greeks, who have hitherto had the protection of the Mahomedan garrisons." A nice protection to the people of Crete these Mahomedan garrisons! The right hon. Gentleman appears to think it very unreasonable of these troublesome people that they were not satisfied with the protection of these Mahomedan garrisons. Now, as soon as Greece appeared on the scene, then, and then only, the Powers began to bethink them of autonomy. It was Greece that invented for the minds of the Powers of Europe the idea of autonomy, which was not mentioned before. If autonomy is now offered to Crete it is due to the Greeks and to the Greeks alone. ["Hear, hear!"] The Cretans would never have had the offer but for the action of Greece—that proposition is incontrovertible. Now, here is a question I have a right to ask, and I hope the Government will consent to answer it. What is the position which the Powers claim to hold in Crete? That has never been explained by Her Majesty's Government, and I ask the Government to give an explanation. Is it under the authority of the Sultan, exercising by delegation the authority of the Sultan? What evidence is there of that? I know no evidence of it. Did Turkey invite the Powers to go to Crete? That is not the language held, at all events by the Under Secretary, for I find in one of the explanations of his given the other day he says:—

> "We have taken Crete away from the Turk." ["Hear, hear!"] "We have confined his garrison to the coast, and are earnestly hoping to get rid of him altogether—the Turk has accepted his dismissal from Crete."

["Hear, hear!"] Then you invaded a country not your own, you have occupied it, and you claim to dispose of it

as you think best for yourselves. You have ousted the authority of the Sovereign. You have not, it is quite true, been invited by the people, but you are going to impose on them a Government they do not desire. Now, what is the position of Greece, and how does it differ from yours? They came adversely, like you, into their position in Crete, and just as you took away Crete from Turkey, Greece has come intending no doubt to take away Crete from Turkey. The only difference I can discover in the international positions is that Greece was invited by the Cretans and you were not. ["Hear, hear!"] Now, I should like an answer to that question. You are both in possession adversely to the Sovereign; but while thĕ one is there with the good will of the majority of the people, the other is in possession contrary to the good will of the people, and trying to impose on them a Government they do not want. ["Hear, hear!"] I should like to have an explanation of the situation from the Government. Why is the position of Greece in Crete a greater violation of international law than your position there? There is another question I should like to ask, for it is a matter we have never had explained. You are blockading Crete, and I should like to ask, whom are you blockading? For what purpose are you blockading Crete? In your declaration of the blockade in the *Gazette* you speak of the six Powers and "neutrals." We know the six Powers; who are the "neutrals"? Who are the belligerents? Are the Turks neutrals or belligerents? They must be one or the other; which of the two are they? Are the insurgents neutrals or belligerents?

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Belligerents.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Member for Sheffield provides an answer, but he is not a Member of a responsible Government at present; he is not conducting the blockade, the Government are. I ask whether the Turks are neutrals or belligerents, whether the insurgents are neutrals or belligerents; and what are the Greeks, neutrals or belligerents? Who, in fact, are the belligerents? Are the insurgents belligerents? Are you then undertaking by force of arms in Crete to put down the Christian insurgents; and are you putting them down by your own authority or by the delegated authority of the Turk? ["Hear, hear!"] The question I should like answered is, Is it your own spontaneous act to put down the insurgents in Crete, or are you acting on behalf of Turkey under the authority of the Sultan? I shall be told, perhaps, that it is to prevent the annexation of Crete to Greece; and I ask, why do you want to prevent the annexation of Crete to Greece? ["Hear, hear!"] I do not ask why the Concert of Powers want to prevent it—I have my own opinion about that—but I ask you why the British Government want to prevent the annexation of Crete to Greece? It is a question, I think, we have a right to ask in the House of Commons, for the whole of the danger to peace at this moment rests on the fact that you are determined that Crete shall not be annexed to Greece. Agree to that annexation and you will have peace to-morrow. I therefore ask you to state why it is you are opposing the annexation of Crete to Greece, which is what the Cretans demand. Is it on principle you are opposed to the annexation, as a thing you think wrong, an evil, a mischief? Not at all. The Under Secretary says this:—"If Crete, after duly considering these great questions"—well, they have considered them for a good many years—"after recovering her equilibrium"—which you are disturbing by opposing annexation to Greece—"were definitely to decide on annexation to Greece, the Powers of Europe, as Lord Salisbury himself has said, will not permanently stand in the way." ["Hear, hear!"] I have no doubt that is your opinion and the opinion of Lord Salisbury; but I ask you now to say, have you authority to say the same for the other Powers, that they will be prepared to allow annexation to Greece, because your saying it alone is nothing so long as the Concert of Europe does not agree in this matter? If it be true that the Concert of Europe is fundamentally radically opposed, not only now but hereafter, to the annexation of Crete to Greece, what is the use of holding out these expectations you have no power to fulfil? This is the root of the whole question. If you and if the Powers did not oppose the annexation you might have peace in 24 hours; therefore, the whole thing turns on the question why you are opposing the annexation. We cannot go back on the old answer that this is the will of the Concert; you must give some reason, some rational explanation, why you are pursuing the course which is the real cause of the present trouble. The Government say, "We offer autonomy to Crete." Yes, and you are blockading Crete at present to compel the great majority of the Cretan people—that is, the Christian population of Crete—to accept autonomy. You say, we will starve and bombard you until you accept autonomy. ["Hear, hear!"] What an extraordinary proceeding this is for a nation like England, professing the opinion that a country should be governed as the people desire, not as other Governments may desire. Why do the people of Crete at this moment resist autonomy? I am not going to tell you in my own words, but in the words used by the Under Secretary in his speech at Southport the other day. He says:—

"I quite understand why and how it is that the Cretan people appear to resist this autonomy. I say appear to resist, because I decline to believe that it is either a genuine or a permanent resistance, but I think they resisted because I doubt if it is fully or adequately explained to them."

Why is it not fully and adequately explained? The reason is that it does not exist at present, that the plan has never been formed. Then he goes on to explain also:—

"As long as the Turkish troops are in the island I can quite understand that the people are reluctant to believe in the reality of the freedom that is offered to them."

That is perfectly true, but you go on bombarding them all the same. [*Opposition cheers.*] What can be more absolutely irrational than that? ["Hear, hear!"] What is your plan of autonomy? The Under Secretary says, "Oh, there are plenty of plans of autonomy"—ready-made autonomy—[*laughter*]—as if the Powers had a sort of slop-shop of autonomous Constitutions, and when the time comes they reach down one of them and starve and bombard the people into accepting it. [*Laughter and cheers.*] That is the sort of autonomy which they offer the Cretan people. The right hon. Gentleman says, and says truly, that they resist because "I do not think it is fully or adequately explained to them." It is only two or three days ago that I read in the newspapers that the Admirals had begged the Consuls to go into the country and explain to the Cretan people the autonomy, and the Consuls very naturally replied, "What autonomy are we to explain?" [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] "We have never heard, and we have never been told, what that autonomy is which is to be explained to them." The right hon. Gentleman says that one of the great difficulties is the presence of the Turkish troops. I ask again, and I say we ought to be told, why are the Turkish troops not removed? Who is opposing it? He says that the English Government have been pressing for it. Yes, we know that they have been pressing, and we give them great credit for pressing it—[*cheers*]—but the fact is that they are not removed. This shows that the English Government in these matters is a *quantité négligeable*, and that their pressure is good for nothing. It shows that they are opposed somewhere. Who is opposing in this matter, which the right hon. Gentleman admits is essential to the pacification of Crete, and who prevents the Turkish troops being removed? Then the right hon. Gentleman, as I pointed out just now, said that there was another thing which was of the most capital importance. I do hope we shall have an answer upon this point, because it has been told to us that the peace of Crete, and for aught I know the peace of Europe, depends upon the removal of these Turkish troops. We want to know when it is going to be done, and who is opposing it. Are the Turkish Government opposing it? ["Hear, hear!"] Are the other Powers of Europe opposing it? What is the use of telling us you are giving us an explanation of your policy when this, which is the most critical question of all, is one upon which you can give us no answer. ["Hear, hear!"] We know the thing has not been done. The practical answer is given in the face of Europe that, although the British Government has been pressing for the removal of these Turkish troops, they are still there, and they are the real cause of all the evil which now exists. But there is another thing which the Under Secretary told us with that extra-Parliamentary candour which he indulges in on the platform. He says:—

> "The most important thing is the creation of a supreme governing authority. The present divided jurisdiction in the island—the Admirals in their ships and in the coast ports, the Turkish garrisons in the fortified positions, and the insurgents in the interior—are, and must be, a source of trouble and friction. It is of the highest importance that a supreme governing authority should be appointed, and that, in the absence of a permanent authority, some provisional authority should take its place."

And then he goes on and makes this very important statement:—

> "I am surprised at the suspicions and misconceptions that have surrounded this question. Surely it goes without saying that the Governor of Crete, when he is appointed, will not be a Turk. Of course, he will be a Christian; of course he will be nominated by the Powers."

I ask this question. Have the Powers agreed to that, and have they determined to do it? You have told us it is the most important thing for the restoration of peace in Crete that this Governor should be nominated by the Powers, and I ask you, why has he not been nominated? ["Hear, hear!"] The friction that is going on is a scandal, I may say, to Europe and a reproach to the Concert of the Powers. [*Cheers.*] You tell us this is a matter of supreme importance and that you are pressing it. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech to-day, told us that it is under discussion; but I saw a day or two ago that Turkey has presented a remonstrance against anything of the kind being done. [*Cheers.*] Are you going to submit to that remonstrance or are you not? ["Hear, hear!"] You have told us that it goes without saying that there is to be a Christian Governor nominated by the Powers.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Hear, hear.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, I hope we shall have it in a more definite form that the Powers have accepted it, and that the Porte, whether they choose or not, will be compelled to accept it. [*Opposition cheers.*] If the right hon. Gentleman says that, categorically it will be satisfactory. We are going on day after day with this state of things which might be removed by this proceeding, and the thing is not done. I will proceed with my catechism. Let me ask this other question. Supposing that you have removed the Turkish troops, which you have not yet done, and supposing you have nominated your Christian Governor, what are you going to do then? You offer autonomy to the Cretans, and they refuse it. Are you going to make war upon them? Are you going to compel them to accept the autonomy whether they choose it or not? It comes from hands which they do not regard as friendly, I am sorry to say. You have so conducted affairs in Crete by joining yourselves in these bombardments—always bombarding the Christians and never bombarding the Turks—that they do not regard you as their friends. They do not desire to accept this autonomy at your hands; they desire annexation to Greece, which you refuse. Then, I want to know, are you going by force of arms to compel them? I see you have sent mountain batteries to Crete. [*Opposition cheers.*] What are you going to do with these mountain batteries? Are you going into the mountains to fire autonomy out of these cannons into the Christians of Crete? ["Hear, hear!"] The "collective wisdom" must have some plan. When they have accomplished the removal of the Turkish troops, and when they have nominated the Christian Governor, what is the plan of the "collective wisdom?" You are going to make war, if you do make war, upon the Cretans and Greeks. Why? I think we ought to have some explanation, and what is that explanation? It is essential, we are told, to the great doctrine of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. That integrity of the Ottoman Empire is a sacred cause which no profane hands must be allowed to touch. The Concert of Europe are the hierophants who minister to the shrine of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. It is at that shrine that the human sacrifices in Armenia were offered up, and we are told that it is all for the love of peace. In Armenia you made a solitude and you called it peace. [*Opposition cheers.*] It was in the name of peace that the Powers abandoned Armenia to her fate. [*Cheers.*] I must say that, when we look at the blood-stained plains of Armenia and the starving Christians in the mountains of Crete, I can hardly describe that collective wisdom as one whose ways are "ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace." ["Hear, hear!"] This method of pursuing peace, which has been the result of this collective action, is one which I think will be much more likely to bring war than ever to accomplish peace. If you are to blockade Greece, why are you going to blockade Greece? That again, is in the name of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Who ever stated that? Who ever made that assertion on behalf of the Government?

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I thought I had explained what I meant by that. I say that the cause of the whole thing is the resistance to the annexation of Crete to Greece—[*Opposition cheers*]—and when we ask why you are opposing that annexation we are told we are bound to do it in the interests of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the whole thing rests upon the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and upon nothing else. There has been no doubt about that. Lord Salisbury's declarations have been clear and explicit upon that point. We have declared that we will not be a party to a policy founded on the integrity of the Ottoman Empire—[*Opposition cheers*]—and to that declaration we adhere. I believe that that declaration has the unanimous support of the Liberal Party—["hear, hear!"]—and a great support in the Party opposite also. I do not believe that they are in favour of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Lord Salisbury was greatly offended and greatly shocked because the Earl of Kimberley had declared that we had done with the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and I had the honour of supporting Lord Kimberley in that view. He said it was a momentous statement. I daresay it was a momentous statement, and it was intended to be so. That is our view, at all events, of this matter; but we ask you what is your view of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and in what position England stands in regard to it? This is what I call getting to the root of the question. We want explanations upon that subject, because it is professedly taken as the whole basis of the action in this matter in Crete. We had some explanation on the subject of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire from the Under Secretary of State. He says people are frightened at the bogey of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. First of all, it is a bogey. [*Laughter.*] Then he says:—

> "Now the integrity of the Ottoman Empire may be viewed as part of the international law. It is an article of the Code of Europe which has been created and consecrated in decrees and treaties by the European Powers, and has been equally modified by them. Europe has created and consecrated that formula."

Therefore, we have got so far. It is a bogey which is a consecrated formula by the European Powers. That makes it quite clear, I think—[*laughter*]—what is the view of the Government of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. And then the right hon. Gentleman says it is "the most elastic formula which is known," and he indicates that we are to be bound by this elastic formula unless we are released from it by the unanimous assent of the Powers. That is a singular explanation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire which lies at the basis of your Eastern policy; but I am bound to say Lord Salisbury treats it in a much more serious manner than the Under Secretary. Lord Salisbury does not say it is a bogey at all.

MR. CURZON: I did not say it was a bogey in itself. I said it was made a bogey by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Well, at all events, it was made a bogey, and Lord Salisbury treated it in a much more grim and serious fashion. He says "the integrity of the Ottoman Empire"—and these are very important words—

> "is established by the Legislature of Europe in a law laid down by the only authority competent to create a law for Europe."

I have never heard of any authority that is competent to lay down a law, or of any Legislature in Europe whatever. It is a perfectly new, and in my opinion a most dangerous and mischievous doctrine. I never heard of a limited number of Powers setting themselves up as a Legislature in Europe to enact law. There are such things as alliances, powerful alliances, in Europe which make covenants with one another appropriate to the circumstances of the time. We know what those covenants were in 1856. They have been described as laying money on the wrong horse. [MR. GIBSON BOWLES: "That referred to a proposal made by Russia."] I beg pardon; I say it was the whole policy in 1856, and the principle by which it was inspired is described as "superannuated superstitions, and antiquated diplomacy." That is the basis of "the law of Europe, established by the Legislature of Europe." That, we are told, is the law of the Medes and Persians, which can only be altered by the assent of all the Powers to it. That, as I understand, is the doctrine you take up, and there can be no departure from the principle of the Treaties of 1856, which Lord Salisbury calls the law of Europe, and these are his words:—

> "What is done will be done by the consent of all the Powers by which the integrity of Turkey was made part of European law."

Is that your doctrine? ["Hear, hear!"] Very well, I will put it to the test. Part of that transaction was the tripartite treaty between Great Britain, Austria, and France, and the articles of that treaty are these. Article 1 says:—

> "The high contracting parties guarantee jointly and severally the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire recorded in the Treaty concluded at Paris on March 30, 1856."

No conditions whatever. The second Article is:—

> "Any infraction of the stipulations of the same Treaty will be considered by the Powers signing the present Treaty as a *casus belli.* They will come to an understanding with the Sublime Porte as to the measures which may become necessary, and will without delay determine amongst themselves as to the employment of their military and naval forces."

Is that the law of Europe? Is it the law even of the three Powers who signed that treaty? And if one of those Powers called upon us to perform the obligations of that treaty, do you mean to say you or any Government in this country would perform them? Why, you know that if the integrity of the Ottoman Empire were invaded, either by insurrection within its own dominions, or by any Power without it, England is not going to make it a *casus belli*, and the obligation is one which we do not acknowledge. [*Opposition cheers.*] I venture to say that neither this Government, nor any Government, would ever sit upon that Bench for 24 hours if it held itself bound to go to war under that tripartite treaty. That is a fair and distinct challenge upon the principles laid down by Lord Salisbury. We have a right, then, to ask what is the view of the Government upon the subject of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. We asked where we stood, and Lord Salisbury's definition of it, in my opinion, is a most dangerous one. He said:—"I feel it is our duty to sustain the federated action of Europe." [*Cheers.*] Yes, whatever it is, and without conditions.

*Admiral FIELD: Hear, hear!

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Ah! but the gallant Admiral, I know, would go into battle at once. [*Laughter.*] There is no reserve whatever in this matter. Lord Salisbury said "he feels it our duty to sustain the federated action of Europe." He thought that was the duty of the British Government, whether that action was right or wrong. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] We have been told, and told truly, by the Under Secretary that it is not for us alone to determine what that action should be; it is for others, and if the other Powers of Europe are of opinion that certain action should be taken, however impolitic, however unwise, however unjust we may think it, we are bound by the federated action of this Legislature of Europe which is entitled to make the law for Europe. Now, let there be no mistake about it, because this is the language of Lord Salisbury, and I beg the attention of the House to it, as this, as far as I know, is the policy of the Government:—

> "Whatever measures the Concert or federation of Europe may, in its wisdom, think it right to take with respect to the integrity of Turkey, we will be no party to a violation of that integrity without their authority."

[*Cheers.*] Lord Salisbury talked of momentous words. These are momentous words. These words express the policy of the Government, and in my opinion that is a most dangerous policy. [*Opposition cheers.*] It is not a policy which the British nation will or ought to support. Conceive what it is. It is not an alliance: it is a submission. Who knows that it will not lead, if the federation of Europe so determine, to the destruction of Greece—Greece, whose freedom is one of the brightest pages in the history of the English people. The freedom of Greece was not secured by the Concert of Europe. I will tell you how it was made. It was made by Mr. Canning refusing to go to the Conference of St. Petersburg, and it was made against the Concert of Europe. You may have the destruction of Greece enacted by this Concert or federation of Europe—if you like in the name of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire—because it suits the convenience or the policy of other countries. I do not desire that we should quarrel with other States, but what I do say is that we cannot assent that the policy of the British nation should be made subordinate and controlled by the decisions of other States. That is a policy to which, in my opinion, this great and free nation will never consent, and it is a policy which we, at least, will meet with a united and determined resistance. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY, who was received with loud Ministerial cheers, said: I should hardly have risen to take any part in a Debate which does not seem to me likely to issue in much profit either at home or abroad, had it not been for the challenge thrown out in the first instance by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, and echoed in much more vigorous language by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. They have charged us—the Party which in this House I have the honour to lead—with having adopted in reference to a Motion put upon the Paper last week by the Leader of the Opposition, a course unparalleled in Parliamentary history. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that we are afraid of discussion, that we are even—save the mark!—afraid of a Division—[*a laugh*]—and that, in order to elude the unpleasant difficulties into which a Vote of Censure might have got us, we have initiated a new precedent in Parliamentary history—one which none of our responsible predecessors would ever have ventured to adopt. Now, let me put that right at once. It is quite true that on previous occasions other ex-Ministers in the position of the right hon. Gentleman have put down Resolutions which did not perhaps in so many words express censure upon the policy of the Government; but, at all events, those Resolutions raised definite issues and were couched in clear and unmistakable language, and the House, after having debated them and divided upon them, presented to the country and to Europe a clear decision upon a clear issue. What was the Resolution which the right hon. Gentleman presented to our notice? These are the words:—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that the forces of the Crown may not be employed against the kingdom of Greece or the people of Crete."

In the face of what has been going on in connection with Greece and Crete, there could not be a more ambiguous Resolution put upon the Paper, and that it was purposely and deliberately ambiguous—[*Ministerial cheers*]—is evident from the fact that the smallest change of words would have made the issue quite clear and direct, and that change of words, though I pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman how effectively it could be brought about, the right hon. Gentleman deliberately refused to adopt. I will put a question to the right hon. Gentleman, who has occupied an hour and a quarter in catechising me. [*Laughter.*] He has accused the Government, in concert with the other Powers of Europe, of constantly bombarding the insurgents. Is that or is it not using the forces of the Crown against the people of Crete? [*Ministerial cheers.*] Is it or is it not? If it is not using the forces of the Crown against the people of Crete, then I do not understand what one-third of the right hon. Gentleman's speech means—[*laughter*]—for he has perpetually gone on the assumption that we are engaged on behalf of Turkey in using the forces of the Crown against the Cretans. ["Hear, hear!"] If he does not think we are doing that, one-fourth of his speech to-night was absolutely pointless and unmeaning. [*Ministerial cheers.*] If he takes the other hypothesis, and says the forces of the Crown are at this moment being used against the people of Crete, why could not he draw his Resolution so as to condemn the action which is now going on before his eyes? [*Ministerial cheers.*] No, Sir, the origin of this precious Resolution, with regard to which the right hon. Gentleman does himself the injustice to suggest that he is the author of it—[*laughter*]—is plain to the humblest observer of Parliamentary procedure. We all see what must have occurred—what undoubtedly did occur. There are Gentlemen in the united Party which follows the right hon. Gentleman—[*laughter*]—anxiously desirous that a real Vote of Censure, condemning what the Government are doing and what they have said they are ready to do, should be put to this House and to the country. Those persons—and I daresay there are not a few sitting on the other side—were perfectly within their right in pressing on their Leaders that such a course should be taken, and if their Leaders had taken that course, we, of course, would have followed the universal precedent and have at once said, "Our policy is challenged; it is challenged in clear, definite, and unmistakable language; that challenge we will take up; that battle we will fight; that issue we will decide in the face of the country." [*Ministerial cheers.*] But these Gentlemen are not the only followers of the right hon. Gentleman. [*Laughter.*] There are others who take a very different, and I am bound to say I think a more statesmanlike view of the present position of this country; of the difficulties with which this country has to deal; of the responsibilities which rest upon this country; and of the course which it ought to pursue. They look very likely, as they have a right to look, upon the Government in an attitude of critical suspicion. That is a very proper attitude for Members of any Opposition to take up with regard to the Government of the day. But an attitude of critical suspicion does not go the length of condemning either what we have done, are doing, or have said that we are prepared to do; and these Gentlemen, therefore, were not prepared to join in that direct Vote of Censure which their friends below the Gangway would have been delighted to see proposed from the Front Bench. [*Laughter.*]

MR. PHILIP STANHOPE (Burnley): There are only six of them. [*Loud laughter and cries of* "Name!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have no wish to pry too minutely into the secrets of the Party opposite—[*laughter*]—and it may be that the persons of whom I speak are few in number. It is evident that they are powerful in authority—[*cheers and laughter*]—and that they make up by their personal weight for the fewness of their numbers. However that may be, it is manifest; and seriously, nobody in or out of the House except Lord Kimberley—[*laughter*]—who had not been able to find time among his multifarious labours of the House of Lords to discuss these questions in that assembly, and who therefore denounces us for not discussing them here—[*laughter*]—there is really nobody except Lord Kimberley who is simple enough to believe that the Opposition did mean to put down on the Paper a direct Vote of Censure dealing with the policy of the Government, or who does not see that, as I have already stated, this Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman is not his drawing or is the product of a body which apparently is even more difficult to manage than the Concert of Europe. [*Laughter.*] But when the right hon. Gentleman accuses us of violating Parliamentary traditions by the course we have adopted, let me tell him that, in my judgment, at all events, the man who made the Norwich speech out of the House—[*cheers*]—and who proceeds to make the speech to which we have just listened in the House, has a theory of his duty to this House which I have never known any responsible Statesman to have before. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT: I have said every single thing to-night that I said at Norwich. [*Cheers and Ministerial laughter.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, has both speeches in his mind with much greater fulness and accuracy than I pretend to have. I am not, perhaps, so persevering a student of the right hon. Gentleman's speeches outside the House as my right hon. Friend near me (Mr. Curzon) professes to be, and I may have been mistaken. But such recollection as I have of that speech leads me to believe that, animated no doubt by the audience which he was addressing, the right hon. Gentleman put much more fire into his invective than he has thought it necessary to use in the tranquil and soothing oration which we have heard to-night. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman, at short intervals through his speech, put a series of questions to me which he prefaced by saying, "We have a right to ask the Government" this, that or the other thing. I am far from denying the right hon. Gentleman's right to put as many questions as he likes, but I would ask any man who listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman whether, after listening to that speech, he definitely made out what it is the Opposition complain of in the course we are pursuing. I confess that if I had to frame a Vote of Censure—if the right hon. Gentleman had done me the honour, which apparently he cannot contemplate without horror—[*laughter*]—of asking me to be his secretary on the occasion and had requested me after hearing that speech to formulate the articles of impeachment which should form the subject of a Vote of Censure—I should have been exceedingly puzzled to do so. [*Laughter.*] There were a great many hard things said of the Concert of Europe, and of us for joining the Concert of Europe; but I did not make out, although I listened attentively to all the right hon. Gentleman said, whether at this moment he did or did not wish us to make our polite bow to the other Powers and to say, "Gentlemen, we have gone so far; we can go no further; we mean now to revert to the splendid isolation"—which was the object of the right hon. Gentleman's vigorous attacks only 12 months ago. [*Ministerial cheers and laughter.*] There are one or two questions put by the right hon. Gentleman with which I must deal. [*Opposition cheers.*] He asked one or two questions of international law with which I feel very unequal to the task of dealing. I do not believe that there is any irregularity in the action which the Powers have taken in Crete. Whether our presence there is regarded with pleasure or not by the Porte is a question with which it is not necessary for me to deal. At all events, the Porte has raised no objection to the presence of the European Powers there; on the contrary, they have signified their assent, and I do not believe that we are violating the technicalities—for after all it is a mere technicality—of international law. The right hon. Gentleman asked me some further questions about the blockade, and here I confess I am even more incapable of dealing adequately with the theme raised than I am when he asks us how we justify the presence of the European forces in the island. The right hon. Gentleman is a great authority, an author, a professor, and a writer of letters upon international law, and is far more capable of dealing with this sort of question than I am; and he has the special experience necessary to deal with this question of a pacific blockade—[*Ministerial cheers*]—as he was one of the Members of the Government which, I believe, first in the history of Europe set the example of a pacific blockade. [*Ministerial cheers and laughter.*] I am quite sure there is no question that could be asked on that point on which he is not capable of enlightening and instructing the House. [*Laughter.*] Then the right hon. Gentleman asked us when the Turkish troops were going to retire, and he said, "You have stated that your policy is to withdraw the Turkish troops." And so it is—[*cheers*]—and that policy will undoubtedly be brought to a successful conclusion. But when the right hon. Gentleman says, "Why do not you withdraw them at once?" let me point out that in addition to any other difficulties which might occur to my mind, there is the difficulty which is being brought upon us by his friends the Greeks and the insurgents. ["Hear, hear!"] You have at this moment in the seaport towns of Crete congregated a vast body of Cretan Moslems, driven there from the interior. Europe itself is in occupation of these towns. On the double ground—that it is not our business to be driven out of them by any force, internal or external, and that it is our duty to see that these Mahomedan Cretans are protected from their embittered opponents—we are bound to see that the positions we have occupied are from a military point of view safe from attack. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I doubt whether at this moment that could be effectually done without, at all events, some assistance from the Ottoman troops. The Ottoman troops have shown themselves, under the guidance of the Powers, perfectly subject to control—I mean the Regulars. As far as I am aware no excess of any kind has been attributed to them by even the most violent and prejudiced of critics. [*Ministerial cheers.*] We have had to disarm a large number of these Moslem Cretans, who naturally burn with the party animosities which so bitterly divide the island, and who could not be trusted with arms. That operation of disarming has been successfully going on. Not that these men are, so far as I know, in any sense worse than their assailants—["hear, hear!"]—for, mark you, these insurgents whom we are accused of bombarding, themselves fired upon women and children who were taking refuge in boats and whose sole desire was to be taken from the island to a place where they might live in reasonable safety. Although one is very reluctant to say anything which would embitter the present feeling upon this question, though one is very loth, in short, to follow the example so freely set by hon. Gentlemen opposite of using the most violent language in regard to any excesses of the kind which, unhappily, are too apt to occur on such occasions as these—[*Ministerial cheers*]—let it be noted that the excesses on the part of the Cretan Christians are in some ways as deplorable as anything which can be justly, as far as I know, attributed to their Mahomedan fellow countrymen. The right hon. Gentleman then proceeded to make a series of half-queries, half-criticisms, upon the doctrine that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire ought, in the present position of Europe, to be maintained. And nothing is more characteristic of the unfair methods in political controversy on which the right hon. Gentleman has been forced back in this and in other cases than the use which he has made of the statement of Lord Salisbury and others that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire ought not, in the interests of peace and of mankind for the sake of all the highest interests of the peoples of the East—at this moment to be allowed to be interfered with lightly. The right hon. Gentleman when he speaks from platforms, or when he thinks his speeches will spread through the country, always uses this phrase about maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, as if it meant maintaining all the evils which are but too incident to Ottoman rule in various parts of Asia and Europe. [*Ministerial cheers.*] No one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman that this integrity of the Ottoman Empire carries with it no such consequences. No one knows better that he that the granting of the freest institutions, the most staple Governments, and the best Administrations to this or to the other part of the Ottoman Empire is perfectly consistent with the maintenance of that integrity in the only sense in which that phrase is used by the publicists of whom the right hon. Gentleman spoke. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Is it not a somewhat discreditable use of rhetorical language—[*loud Ministerial cheers*]—that the right hon. Gentleman should use the just emotions of horror which the massacres in Asia Minor and the misgovernments elsewhere have raised in the minds of the British people against the Government of the Porte—that he should use that prejudice in favour of the scramble for the fragments of the Ottoman Empire, which, apparently, is the policy the right hon. Gentleman desires to see adopted? [*Ministerial cheers.*] There is always a danger in the popular use of words which have a technical significance to politicians and diplomatists. But it is the business of those who desire to see the foreign policy of this country conducted upon methods and for objects which, I believe, are dear, not to one side of the House, but to the whole population at large, to take care that these misunderstandings are not aggravated, but are dissipated. It is their business not to use, but rather to sacrifice, such small advantages as may possibly, for the moment, accrue from the raising of unnecessary prejudice, in order to secure the greater objects to which, I am persuaded, even the right hon. Gentleman himself is not in his more careful moments indifferent. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I do not think it necessary to add anything to what my right hon. Friend has said with regard to recent events, either in Crete or in Greece. But let the House and the country remember that the single central question which we have to decide is this—Has this great country done more for the interests of peace and of freedom by associating itself with the rest of the Powers of Europe than it would have done if it had remained in strict isolation? [*Ministerial cheers.*] That is the central question; and it is the answer to that question which really contains the final judgment which ought to be passed on the policy of the Government. ["Hear, hear!" *from* Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT *and other Members of the Opposition.*] I hear the right hon. Gentleman cheer that. Therefore he is clearly of opinion—though he did not state it explicitly in his speech, however much he might have hinted at it—that we ought from the beginning, ever since we have been in office, to have pursued our policy, if we could have so pursued any policy, in isolation and absolutely irrespective of the views and wishes or interests of the other Powers. ["Hear, hear!"] I should like to see him formulate that in a Vote of Censure. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] I will promise him a day. [*Renewed Ministerial cheers and laughter.*] There are two parts of the world principally with regard to which that question is relevant at the present time. One is Armenia, and the other is Crete; and though Armenia is not now in question the right hon. Gentleman, in his speech, alluded to it too frequently for me to be permitted to pass it by absolutely without reference. The right hon. Gentleman actually went to the length of saying that Europe had made itself *particeps criminis* in the butcheries which have taken place in certain parts of Asia Minor. [*Opposition cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman has himself tried to deal with the Armenian question. He was in power when the worst of all the massacres took place. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): No, not in the autumn of 1895.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman was in power when the worst of the massacres took place; he was unable to deal with them, and neither he nor any responsible statesman has ever yet pointed out how they could have been dealt with by this country in isolation. [*Ministerial cheers.*] If the right hon. Gentleman in the course of this or of any other of his many speeches had ever suggested how this country, acting alone, acting probably in conflict with some of the greatest Powers in Europe, could have done more than we actually have done to prevent these massacres, he would have made some contribution, as far as Armenia is concerned, to the determination of the question whether we are right or wrong in attempting to act with the European Powers as a whole. But when he tells us we have done nothing for the subject populations in Asia, let me tell him that his information is, in my judgment, wholly inaccurate. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I believe that we have done, not, indeed, as much as might have been done, certainly not as much as we all must wish could have been done, but something to improve the *personnel* of administration. And, if the efforts of Europe for reforms in Asia Minor and in Europe have received a check through the recent events in Crete, there is no ground for supposing that those labours are wasted or that they may not in due time bear legitimate fruit. But in any case, whether the reforms of the Turkish Empire, which I believe that Europe will get the Porte to adopt, do or do not succeed in producing a marked amelioration in the condition of the subject populations, this is certain—that if we have failed in concert with the other Powers, then a thousand times more completely and disastrously should we have failed if we had acted without the other Powers. [*Ministerial cheers.*] So much for Armenia; now as to Crete. The right hon. Gentleman considers that more would have been done for the liberty of Crete if we had refused to act with the other Powers than has actually been done. I am unable to follow the steps of the right hon. Gentleman's argument; I am unable even to conjecture what the steps of his argument are, for he did not condescend to give them in detail. But if I can picture England holding aloof from affairs in the East, and allowing those affairs to be managed wholly by the other Great Powers and by Turkey and Greece, then I am bound to say that, whatever would have been the issue—though we no doubt should not be responsible for it, except by abstention—it would certainly not have been, as far as I can judge, what it now is—namely, the conferring of complete freedom and autonomy upon the island, which has been so long the theatre of these internal difficulties and disturbances. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman is perpetually haunted by the fear that the promises which we have held out to the House, and the pledges which we have given to the country with regard to the autonomy of Crete are not to be fulfilled in their entirety. I firmly believe that they will be fulfilled, and more than fulfilled. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I believe that the autonomy on which the Powers of Europe will agree will be at least as full as, and perhaps fuller, than that autonomy sketched by my right hon. Friend in his speech at Southport, and with regard to the fulfilment of which the right hon. Gentleman asked me whether I had any confidence. I have that confidence. Europe has the power, and Europe is absolutely pledged to do it. And, if the present difficulties issue in a form of autonomy less complete and less satisfactory than that which has been found to work so well in other parts of the Turkish Empire, I shall then for the first time begin to doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman had not some justification for the attack which he has made on the Concert of Europe. I frankly say that I am unable to see any evil which has happened to anybody through our joining the Concert of Europe; and I do see the greatest advantages which have accrued both to the cause of freedom and to the cause of peace. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman openly said that the Powers of Europe, for their own selfish ends, wanted to keep the peace, but cared nothing at all for freedom and good government. I do not know whether it is consistent with the position of the Leader of a great Party to fling these accusations wholesale against Powers friendly to this country—[*Ministerial cheers*]—Powers with whom he has had to deal in a responsible position, and with whom he may again have to deal in an equally responsible position. [*Cries of* "No!"] But as far as this country is concerned, at all events, even the right hon. Gentleman admits that our desires are in favour of good government and freedom; and he has produced no fact, nor made any valid suggestion, which would induce anyone to believe that what he admits to be our desires are not going to receive fulfilment. [*Ministerial cheers.*] When the right hon. Gentleman challenges me upon the right of Europe to prevent the scramble for the Turkish Empire, which he appears to desire, I tell him that in my judgment there is no right—no international right—more obvious and more above criticism. If you are going to give a free hand to Greece, you cannot refuse a free hand to Bulgaria.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Why refuse?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Exactly. You cannot refuse a free hand to Bulgaria. The hon. Gentleman agrees with me, not in the conclusions but in the premisses—a most inconvenient ally of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. [*Laughter.*] At all events, the hon. Gentleman and I are agreed that if you give a free hand to Greece you must give a like free hand to Bulgaria, to Servia, to Montenegro, to Roumania, if need be; and the hon. Gentleman quite consistently wishes to bring a Vote of Censure against the Government, whose view is, on the contrary, that the destiny of the Turkish Empire should as far as possible remain a question of international agreement, and not be given up to the general arbitration of internecine war. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Does the right hon. Gentleman opposite agree with us or does he agree with his hon. Friend below the gangway (Mr. Labouchere)? [*Ministerial cheers and laughter.*] Here you have a choice between two policies, both of them coherent, both of them logical—the policy of the hon. Gentleman and the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The policy of Her Majesty's Government is that the affairs of Turkey are international affairs, that the freedom granted to such portions of Turkey as it can be granted to should be by the united will of Europe, and should be subject to general European control; and that the decay of that Empire, if decay there is to be, should take place. The hon. Gentleman's view, on the other hand, is that the Turkish Empire has got to the point when you have simply got to let loose upon it the dogs of war, to let each Power scramble for what it wants, and let the weakest go to the wall. These are quite clear and inconsistent policies, and there may be something to be said for both of them. But what is there to be said for the policy of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends—[*laughter*]—who are neither consistent advocates of leaving the whole matter to settle itself as it can, nor consistent advocates of the other policy—more difficult, more strenuous, but surely a more fruitful policy, the one which we advocate—that, namely, of European control? [*Ministerial cheers.*] None of us on this Bench, certainly not either my right hon. Friend near me or myself, have ever for one moment disguised the difficulties and the dangers which are inherent in the common action of six such different Powers as those which divide Europe. I do not minimise them at the present time; I grant them to the full. But so long as the Powers can be got to work in harmony, and so long as that work is in favour of peace and of freedom, then why in Heaven's name should we be false not merely to the traditions of this country, but to every tradition of honour, of sound policy, and of humanity by refusing to bear our share in that difficult but surely not inglorious task? [*Ministerial cheers.*]

MR. F. S. STEVENSON said that those who had taken a deep interest in Eastern affairs had never understood the Concert of Europe in the sense now laid down. They had always understood by it the action of those Powers which were chiefly interested in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman in his references to events in the Armenian provinces had not taken the trouble to refresh his memory. As a matter of fact, the massacre at Sasun was by no means the greatest of the massacres; the greatest massacres took place in October, November, and December of 1895, and also January, 1896. That was since the present Government came into office. He only mentioned that point because the right hon. Gentleman appeared to think the greatest massacres occurred in 1894, which was not the case. With regard to what the Concert was doing in Asia Minor, the House had no information whatever, and there was no ground, so far as our present knowledege was concerned, why possible action on the part of the Concert in Asia Minor should be adduced as a reason for acting in accord with the other Powers in regard to Crete. The right hon. Gentleman said the Government had no knowledge of any negotiations between Turkey and Greece. It was a curious thing that what was matter of common knowledge should not have reached the responsible Ministers of this country. If the right hon. Gentleman would address a simple inquiry on that point to our Ambassador at Constantinople he would be able to obtain information which would have a useful bearing on the present situation with regard to negotiations between Turkey and Greece, which were stopped by the action of one or other of the Great Powers. With regard to Crete, if the Powers were in earnest, all they had to do was to insist on the trans-shipment of the Turkish troops away from Crete, and at the same time to put before the people of Crete, in clear and unmistakable language, that the autonomy was to be a real and not unsubstantial autonomy, including the right to choose their own ruler and their own form of rule. If the Government would do that, and induce some of the other Powers to take the same view, they would find not only the situation in regard to Crete had been enormously simplified, but also that the chances of European peace had been vastly augmented, and that the difficulties which now loomed on the northern horizon would for the time sink into the background. It could not be contended that Germany, for example, a Great Power numerically, had the same interests in the Balkan Peninsula as Greece, or Bulgaria, or Servia, or even little Montenegro. Every one of these Powers had more right to be consulted than Germany, and yet in this matter the Great Powers professed to have the exclusive right to settle the question. The Hellenic race outside numbered three times the population of that in the kingdom of Greece, and it had a stronger right to be heard than any of the Great Powers. Bulgaria, Servia, and Montenegro had also a right to be heard and consulted. The Great Powers professed to have the East in their hands for disposal, but he protested against the exclusion from the councils of the Concert of the smaller and rising nationalities of the East.

*Mr. C. J. MONK (Gloucester) said it was right that Conservatives and Liberal Unionists should express their criticisms with regard to this question as freely as hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had seen no cause to change the opinion he formed many years ago that the protecting Powers made a grave mistake in not allowing the annexation of Crete to Greece in 1830; yet they could not shut their eyes to the fact that the Great Powers had now unanimously come to a decision that in no circumstances at present would they allow the annexation of Crete to Greece. It was clear that Greece singlehanded could not contend against the will of the Powers. If, however, the Powers had insisted on a simultaneous evacuation of Crete by the Turks and the Greeks, there would have been no probability of war. He believed that Greece was willing to assent to that, provided that the ruler should be selected by the inhabitants of Crete. What struck him most was the unreality of the situation. The Great Powers had offered autonomy to Crete, but Crete had never asked for it, while numerous revolutions had taken place in favour of annexation. They were constantly being reminded that the Treaty of Paris ought to be observed, whereby the Powers had pledged themselves to maintain the integrity and the independence of the Ottoman Empire. But that Treaty was torn to shreds many years ago by Russia when she expressed her intention of no longer being bound by the condition which confined her fleet to the Black Sea. Did France and Great Britain pay much attention to that Treaty when they established the dual control in Egypt, and removed Ismail Pasha from the Khedivial Throne? Was Lord Beaconfield deterred by the Treaty of Paris from bringing Cyprus from the Congress of Berlin in his pocket? Province after province had been torn from Turkey; some of them had been created principalities, with a sort of shadowy suzerainty left to the Porte, while some had been annexed to existing kingdoms. He had heard with pain and regret the endeavour made to humiliate Greece by throwing in her teeth her poverty and inability to pay full interest on the national debt. What was the cause of this? When the Hellenic Kingdom was established, its borders were curtailed to such an extent that the newly-established kingdom was utterly unable to maintain her proper state and find funds necessary for the position of a European kingdom. Since 1821 no fewer than eight insurrections had occurred in Crete, and on each occasion thousands of refugees had been sent to Greece. Thus Greece was made poor by having to maintain these refugees, and it was scarcely generous of English Members to reproach her with a poverty for which she was not responsible. He thought that if the British Government had left the Concert of Europe, it would have given a freer hand to some of the other Powers to coerce Greece. He believed that the presence of our Ambassador at Constantinople had an excellent effect in preventing certain outrageous proposals from being adopted on the part of one or more of the other Powers. He was sure that autonomy to Crete would eventually prove a failure. Autonomy might endure for a while, but annexation would come in the end, and with it would come rest and peace and prosperity to the fairest island in the Ægean over which the upas tree of Turkish misrule had long cast its deadly shade.

MR. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport) said that there were two circumstances which gave this Debate special importance. One was that they were on the eve of a longer Easter recess than usual, and that during that recess hon. Members would have no opportunity of hearing from the Government what their policy was, or of checking it. The other circumstance was that the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were one and the same person. When these positions were for the first time fillled by the same person, Mr. Gladstone moved an Amendment to the Address objecting to the arrangement. Now Lord Salisbury was practically an autocrat in regard to foreign affairs, which added considerable danger to the situation. Lord Salisbury was a politician with a past, and that past was not such as to inspire great confidence in his conduct of foreign affairs. Had hon. Members observed how extraordinary a similarity there was between the progress of events in the last six months, and the progress of events in the same period 20 years ago? In June 1876 they learned for the first time through the Press of the Bulgarian atrocities, and there was at once a spontaneous uprising in the country. Attention was drawn to the subject by the Marquess of Bath, a Tory in the House of Lords, and by Mr. Forsyth, a Tory also, in the House of Commons. By September 1876, the whole Liberal Party, with that third of the electorate which was neither Conservative nor Liberal, were united as one man under the leadership of that Minister who had been well described by a foreign Statesman as "The Minister of Pity." Suddenly, the force of the agitation that threatened to sweep the Government from office was dissipated, because certain prominent leaders of the Liberal Party refused to follow Mr. Gladstone's lead any longer. The result was that the rein was given to the Jingo anti-climax, and that state of things continued until Lord Beaconsfied brought back his so-called "peace with honour" from Berlin. But from June 1876 to April 1878 there was one Minister in the Cabinet who was regarded by friends and foes alike as the one Member of the Government who was for the Christians as against the Turks. That Minister was Lord Salisbury. But when, in 1878, the Foreign Secretaryship and the reversion of the Premiership were offered to him, in spite of all that he had said during the preceding 21 months, he renounced what the people had been led to believe were his convictions, and became a party to the threat of war against Russia, and to a policy of which he, of all men, probably much disapproved. Therefore, he thought it dangerous that they should rise for the recess, during which the conduct of the foreign policy of this country would be wholly in the hands of Lord Salisbury, without knowing what the Government were going to do next. They had the experience of the past to warn them. On April 16, 1878, Parliament rose, and there was a Debate like the present, information being anxiously sought as to the intentions of the Government, for we seemed to be on the verge of war with Russia. Sir Stafford Northcote declared that the House might rely upon it that no new move was in contemplation; but two days afterwards they read in the papers of the proposed employment of the Indian troops. Precedents of that kind were not encouraging, and they were naturally anxious for more information than had yet been given them. He wanted to know what were the forces of which the Government were afraid inside the Concert? They were told that the Government were honestly anxious to give autonomy to Crete, that there was to be a Christian governor, and that the Turkish troops were to be withdrawn. Then why were these things not done? It was clear that within the Concert there were forces hostile to the Eastern Christians. The policy of the Government and the action of the Concert had not availed to save one single Armenian life, or to secure Armenian women from outrage. Why could not the Government imitate the example of Canning? They always spoke as if they must either remain muzzled inside the Concert or leave it. But there was a third course. There was the course taken by Canning—namely, that of remaining in the Concert for the purpose of smashing it. The three Great Naval Powers might then be able to come to an agreement for the settlement of the questions affecting Crete. As it was, our Fleet had shelled the Christians in the island, but had not fired a gun against the Turk; no effort had been made to remove the Turkish troops, and no pressure had been brought to bear upon the Turks in the island. The Government doubtless thought that with their majority they could be independent. They would do well, however, not to be over-confident, for the people were moved by this Cretan question to an extent not exceeded in the last 20 years. The people cared nothing for the Concert of Europe, and there was amongst them a feeling of intense indignation at the nation that in any circumstances whatever a British ship should fire against either Cretans or Greeks. He believed the Government was strong enough to smash up the Concert of Europe and make another combination which would tell for freedom and justice. Meanwhile they were left without information, England being dragged at the tail of this Concert because the Government had not the pluck to resist it. This was the most degrading position which the country had been placed in for many years, and he believed it would bring a just retribution on the Government when the first opportunity occurred.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said the hon. Member for Devonport had taunted the Government with not having saved a single life in Armenia at the time when the Concert of Europe was being maintained, but he had also committed himself to the statement that England was first of all a Naval Power. What then did the hon. Member think that this country ought to have done? The whole argument of the hon. Member was not worthy of consideration. Moreover, his remarks were offensive as well as inconclusive. The hon. Member also said that they were either misled, or else that England remained in the Concert of Europe in order to smash it. The latter suggestion was an imputation of dishonourable conduct, which it was unnecessary to refute. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had made the strange statement that the Liberal Party was unanimous on this question. They had not seen many signs of this unanimity, at all events. The right hon. Member had also said, with a remarkable amount of assurance, that hon. Gentlemen opposite represented the opinion of the country. He took exception to any such statement. In that House the concentrated essence of the opinion of the country was represented, and he took exception to a Member of a Party which was in a very considerable minority claiming to represent the feeling of the country. That Parliament was young and vigorous, and had a long life before it. He had studied this question from a naval point of view. The Navy had a great deal to do with this question in 1829. He had always thought that a terrible mistake had been made at that time, and the Admirals on the spot after the battle of Navarino all strongly urged that Crete should be united to Greece. It was, however, useless to find fault with past history. No doubt the statesmen of that day realised that it was necessary, in order to preserve the balance of power in Europe, to keep the Ottoman Empire as strong as possible. Of late public opinion had changed with regard to Turkey. No one now would lift a finger to save the Ottoman Empire if he had the power. He trusted that no more mistakes would be made. He knew from communications he received from Crete that the naval officers there did not like the business they were engaged in. [*Opposition cheers.*] But they were the servants of their country, and wished to do their duty. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean spoke of England as the slave of the Concert of Europe, and advised that we should cut ourselves adrift from it.

*Sir C. DILKE: With other Powers who, I suggested, might be willing to follow us.

*Admiral FIELD said he could well believe that France was in sympathy with England, but she was fettered by another Power, and as long as this was so, was it reasonable to expect that she would follow us? If England retired from the Concert of Europe, the Cretans, whose liberty and freedom the Party opposite said they desired, would lose their best friend among the Powers of Europe. If England cut herself adrift from the rest of Europe she would have no voice in the settlement of the Cretan difficulty but by going to war. Looking at the matter all round, he was certainly of opinion, much as he disliked the present situation, that it would be a disastrous stroke of policy for England to retire from the Concert of Europe. We ought to reflect what advantages had accrued to the Cretans by the presence of England in the Concert of Europe. The blockade of Crete last autumn was prevented because England refused to be a party to it, and to play the part of policeman for Turkey. If England withdrew from the Concert of Europe her withdrawal would be final. She could not re-enter, and she would have no voice in the consultation from which she had withdrawn unless she asserted her power by force. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Edinburgh on November 25, 1879, in denunciation of the policy of Lord Beaconsfield in sending the British fleet to the Dardanelles when the Russians were outside Constantinople, and so preventing the Treaty of San Stefano from being brought into operation, said:—

> "We always protested against single-handed attempts to coerce Turkey. We felt that single-handed attempts to coerce Turkey would tend to immoderate bloodshed and calamity and with uncertainty as to the issue. The coercion we recommended was by the united authority of Europe, and in a case where the united authority of Europe was brought into action there was no fear of having to proceed to active coercion."

He respectfully commended this to the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for Northampton. Could it be said that what was considered sound policy by the Liberal Leader then was not sound policy now? Turkey was now weak, and a more potent source of mischief than in days when she was strong, and he considered Mr. Gladstone's argument had greater force now. The Leader of the Opposition objected to the Concert of Europe committing us to any policy it chose, and said there were limits beyond which England ought not to go.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I quoted Lord Salisbury, who said that.

*Admiral FIELD said he thought the right hon. Gentleman gave it as his own opinion. As he had said, naval men hated this business. Their firing on the insurgents had been spoken of as if they did it of their own free will. The officers who ordered the guns to be fired would regret the necessity, but it was done to prevent the insurgents from occupying positions which dominated the town and anchorage. Warnings had been sent to the insurgents which they never received. That was not the fault of the naval officers. No doubt they fired wide. There was no real Concert of Europe until Lord Salisbury met the Czar of Russia at Balmoral in October last, and by his Dispatch of October 21, 1896, brought the Powers into line, Russia consenting to force being used if the reforms undertaken by Turkey were not carried out. The Concert of Europe existed nominally before, but there was no real Concert of Europe until that date. As long as the Concert of Europe existed it made for peace. He was quite sure that if the Leader of the Opposition were in office he would not care to see England withdrawing from the Concert of Europe and having no voice in the settlement of the Cretan difficulty except by the use of force. He studied with great interest as soon as it appeared the work of "Historicus" on "International Law." He always understood that international law was founded on the Concert of Europe. This Concert of Europe might arrive at a certain decision, and whatever that decision was, it would be entitled to more respect than the right hon. Gentleman (who was the author of those famous letters, signed "Historicus") had given it that night. The right hon. Gentleman had asked what they meant by a blockade. He was with him there, for he was sure he did not know what it was. He looked upon it as the exercise of a certain amount of necessary force to prevent supplies reaching the Greek troops. None of them wished to stop the supply of necessaries reaching the insurgents, and he hoped a blind eye might be turned to any vessel engaged in this latter work. What he presumed was intended was to hinder supplies reaching the Greek troops who had no business to be on the island. Why did the right hon. Gentleman say they were bombarding the Christians? They did not wish to starve them, or to hurt a hair of their heads, and all they were trying to do was to prevent them planting guns in a position which would enable them to fire on the passive inhabitants of these towns. Again, the right hon. Gentleman asked why were the Turkish troops not withdrawn? He wished they were, for he believed there would be no peace in the island until they were. The Admirals had recommended the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, and it was not the fault of this country that they had not been withdrawn. Where they had six leading men, representing six leading countries, none of whom could come to a decision upon what action could be taken without reference to the Government of his particular country, there must necessarily be delay. He knew that everybody on his side of the House wished to see all the Turkish troops out of the island, and for the sake of legality he wished to see the Greek troops also out of the island. He stood not on the order of their going, but he wished them to go at once. He did not, however, see how the matter could be forwarded by discussions such as had taken place that night, and which, instead of serving any useful purpose, could only tend to embarrass the Government in dealing with a question of great difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman had made light of the words, "integrity of the Ottoman Empire." He presumed the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that not a man in England would lift up his little finger to maintain the Ottoman Empire. He supposed it was a figure of speech, and to please other Powers, that they had to support the policy of autonomy for Crete when they should all prefer that the Cretans should have direct annexation to Greece. But they could not always get what they wanted at once; they must take it by instalments, and Crete had already been assured that if she would be patient and accept the benefits of the rule offered to her of autonomy, the annexation she desired would come in due course. He urged that the Government in their action in this matter, instead of deserving any censure, merited the support of the House and of the country.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) remarked that the hon. Member had asked why a little more patience on the part of the Cretans could not be shown in the Great Powers of Europe? Anybody who had followed the history and fortunes of this unhappy people, even for one year, could have no difficulty in answering that question. The Cretans, in August of last year, were promised certain reforms by the representatives of the Great Powers, and, trusting to these promises, they laid down their arms. Fortunately they did not part with them altogether. What was the consequence? Within two or three months of those promises being given, the Cretans were handed over to pillage, murder and massacre. On the 5th of February last, under the very guns of the ships of the Great Powers which were lying in the port, all the Christian quarters of Canea were delivered over to flames, and rapine was let loose in the streets. It was mockery for the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs or the First Lord of the Treasury to stand up at this time of day and say that the people of Crete ought to trust to the pledges given them on behalf of the foreign Powers, and ought to wait patiently for those reforms and this autonomy that were promised them. They were told that autonomy was certain. But what was meant by autonomy no man outside the sacred circle of the Foreign Office understood. The Under Secretary, speaking to his constituents on Saturday, declared that autonomy (which he denounced the Irish Members for opposing) was synonymous with Home Rule. Did the right hon. Gentleman really mean that it was a similar measure of reform to the Home Rule Bill for Ireland? If he did, then he had to tell him that that autonomy would be utterly valueless to protect the liberty of Crete. Home Rule for Ireland left the forces of the Crown under the control of the Central Executive in this country, and left the troops of Her Majesty in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the whole matter was settled when he declared that the autonomy offered to Crete was the same as that offered to

Ireland. If the First Lord or the Under Secretary knew themselves, they let nobody else know what this autonomy, which was in a state of nubibus, was supposed to be. When the First Lord of the Treasury and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs declared that the liberty of Crete was secured, he would refer those right hon. Gentleman to what the Consuls and Admirals on the spot had said, and he quoted an extract from *The Times'* correspondent at Canea, dated 8th of the present month:—

> "In a conference this morning at Suda the Admirals informed the Consuls that their Governments had considered that it might be advisable to explain clearly to the insurgents that the blockade was directed against the Greek troops, and also that autonomy was to be granted to the island. The Admirals stated that they had informed their Governments that they considered such a measure useless. The Consuls concur in this opinion, and express the conviction that, unless something more definite than a mere proclamation of autonomy can be made by them, no result can be expected of a mission to the insurgents by the Consular body."

So, out of the mouths of their own Consuls the Powers were condemned. After six weeks of muddling and absurd statements and answers, here was the joint wisdom of the Admirals and Consuls on the spot, declaring that unless some particulars were given of the terms of autonomy it would be no use the Consuls going among the insurgents or making any proclamation at all. In the very same letter there was a most characteristic paragraph:—

> "Since yesterday there has been sharp firing round Candia, which was continued to-day, the Turkish troops all sallying out, and the patrolling of the town being done by the European troops."

And it was added the Seaforth Highlanders had been landed. In spite, then, of the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman, no longer ago than the 8th of the present month the Turks required the Seaforth Highlanders to maintain order in the town while they went out upon one of their usual sallies. And all the time there was no authoritative, no specific or definite declaration before the insurgents of the scheme of autonomy which the Consuls would not take on themselves the responsibility of fathering. He maintained, and he insisted, that up to this hour the insurgents had not one shred of justification or ground for hope that if they laid down their arms they might place reliance on the action of the Powers. They were left to their own resources and their arms alone. When he heard men talk of the unreason and the want of patience displayed by the insurgents he felt how cruel it was to use such arguments against a race who for centuries had suffered persecution, tyranny and oppression beyond any other people in Europe. Disorderly and troublesome they had been, incurring the sneers and contemptuous allusions of the right hon. Gentleman the other day at Southport, but they had reason to be proud of their conduct. They had not been butchered like the Armenians; they had manfully faced their oppressors, and had struck back blow for blow; they were entitled to the sympathy of Europe. They had some excuse for their impatience; they had good reason to be suspicious. They had rebelled over and over again; they had fought for, and had now, their liberty again and again, but had been thrust back again under the feet of their oppressors. The gallant Admiral opposite had referred to the hatred of naval men of the job upon which they were engaged; he had the acquaintance of many naval men, and had not the slightest doubt that this was their feeling. This country had the particular duty to redress the grievances of the Cretans, for it was this country, against the views of France and Russia, after the gallant struggle from 1827 to 1830, thrust back the people under the heel of Turkey. The Cretans, after another noble struggle, appealed to the Powers at the Berlin Conference; they were listened to; they were promised reforms; they trusted to the faith of Europe, but that faith was basely broken; they were pushed back under the control of their enemies, and deeds of infamous cruelty were perpetrated such as could hardly be spoken of in the House. They had risen and fought again and again for their liberties, and last autumn the Powers of Europe again offered them a Constitution. There was no more touching incident in connection with this struggle than the way in which the Cretan leaders expressed their thanks to the Powers of Europe for the Constitution, expressing the confident hope that the Powers would superintend the carrying out of those reforms in such a way as would put a period to the sufferings of their country. But the Powers of Europe betrayed them again; they were again handed over to the cruelty and treachery of the Turks. To anyone who had followed the course of events, it must create a feeling of disgust to hear the First Lord of the Treasury say that the attitude of the Porte towards these people had been perfectly correct. What was that attitude? When the Constitution of last year was given to the Cretan people they did not like that Constitution; they desired, as they had always desired, to be united to Greece; but at the desire of the Powers and entreaties by the Greek Government, anxious to avoid the situation into which they had now been driven, they accepted that Constitution in good faith. And what was the conduct of the Porte? The Porte was bound to appoint a Christian Governor, and did so. But they forthwith sent a military Governor of higher authority, who overruled and set at naught the authority of the Christian Governor, and secret instructions were sent to the Turkish troops and Moslems in the island to take sufficient measures and proper means, in plain English, by murder and by the looting of Christian houses, to create disorder and secure that the new Constitution should not succeed. It was clearly and unmistakably the duty of the Powers of Europe, if they did not mean to break their plighted faith, to have forthwith and immediately taken measures by force to see the Constitution of August last loyally carried out by the Porte. What did they do? They sent ships to Crete. Were they for the protection of the Cretan people? No, they were not; and the Dispatches showed they were not. The ships were sent to Crete, not for the protection of the Christians of Crete, but for the protection of the British subjects there; and all along, month after month, there were instructions sent to the Admirals, and correspondence with the captains clearly showed that fugitive Christians were not to be allowed on board, and actually in the Dispatches descriptions were given of the precautions taken by captains, in case of riot and slaughter, to prevent Greek Christians taking refuge on the ships, and to reserve the protection of the ships for British subjects alone. The ships were in Cretan waters, not to secure the carrying out of reforms, but to protect British subjects and property when it became apparent that disorder would break out. So far as he could understand, the first step to protect Christians was taken on the initiative of the French Government, who gave orders to extend protection to all Christians and not to French subjects only, and then the British Government followed suit.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: No; it was the other way about.

MR. DILLON said he must join issue with the hon. Member. He had read the Blue-book carefully.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: So have I.

MR. DILLON said they laboured under one great difficulty in having an Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs who must frequently regret that he was born in a constitutional country. There was an extraordinary statement in his speech the other day at Southport. He declared that the Opposition in the House spent about two hours every night—

MR. CURZON: No; I did not say that. I said spent about half-an-hour each night. And most of the time was occupied by the hon. Member. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. DILLON said he had a perfect right to spend half-an-hour on the subject; he would spent three hours if he thought he could be the means of saving one life among this Christian population. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman said at Southport the Opposition spent half-an-hour every night in trying to "score off him." The right hon. Gentleman was somewhat oppressed by the importance of his position. No one of the Opposition ever dreamed of scoring off him; it was never within the wildest dreams of their ambition; they did not dream of scoring off a Member of the Government of such abnormal intelligence and acuteness; they simply endeavoured to obtain such information as the British House of Commons was entitled to have. It appeared to some of the Opposition that the right hon. Gentleman, with the present Ministry, had turned attention so much to the proceedings of the Concert of Europe that they had come to regard the method of conducting affairs in Russia and Germany as far preferable to that which was followed in the House. No doubt it was more convenient for Ministers; but the right hon. Gentleman had been born in a constitutional country, with a free Parliament, in which he had a seat which, judging from his former action, he was extremely desirous of retaining, notwithstanding the criticisms to which he was there subject, and could not wish to move to a more distinguished place. All the Opposition had tried to do was to elicit such information as the House of Commons was entitled to possess. If the questions were numerous, and he was hard pressed, it was because the curt answers of the right hon. Gentleman gave very little information. The right hon. Gentleman was pleased to be extremely hard on Irish Members; he spoke of them as a faction always in sympathy with insurgents in all parts of the world, and he supposed that was because they had so often been insurgents themselves. That was probably intended to be a cruelly crushing blow to the Irish people, but he, as an Irish Member, accepted the words in a totally different sense. He dared say it was quite true that they naturally sympathised with insurgents because they had so often been insurgents themselves, and he was not at all certain that that was a thing to be ashamed of. If the Irish Members were open to the charge and suspicion of being too sympathetic with insurgents, he thought they were entitled to retort that the worst people in the world who could be placed in unrestrained control of insurgents were Admirals. [*Laughter.*] If the first instinct of the Irishman was to rebel, the first instinct of an Admiral was to maintain discipline without any regard to the merits of the case. [*Laughter.*] There was a special reason why he and the Irish Party with whom he acted took an interest in the fight of the Cretan and Greek peoples. The voices of O'Connell and Grattan were raised 60 years ago in that Parliament to claim that Crete should have her rights, and be set free from the tyranny of Turkey, while the name of a great and gallant Irishman had been identified with the War of Independence—one who, he supposed, contributed most to the vindication of the liberty of Greece, and, after all, the liberty of Crete was at one with the liberty of Greece. When one read the inscription over the tomb of Richard Church at Athens, "that he gave himself and all he had to rescue a Christian race from oppression and to make Greece a nation," he thought that was another bond which bound the Irish National Party to the cause of Greece. They were told that Greece and Crete and that the House of Commons must trust absolutely to the Concert of Europe, and the First Lord of the Treasury endeavoured to make out that this country was tied by the alternative of either withdrawing from the Concert of Europe or of submitting absolutely, without any limit whatever, to whatever the Concert decided. He utterly denied that any such alternative was placed before this country. The Concert of Europe might be, and he dared say sometimes was, a very excellent thing, but it had been, and they saw it might be, the most malignant and hateful enemy of liberty, and it would be an evil day for liberty if the doctrine were to be laid down, as it had been laid down frequently during these later days, that for the future this country and every great State in Europe was to be bound absolutely to the Concert to do what they willed and to abstain from doing what they forbade. The fault most of them had to find with the present Concert was that they did nothing, and that what little they did seemed to make for mischief. [*Ministerial laughter.*] Here was a passage which struck him as being most characteristic and most significant of the estimation in which the Concert of Europe was at present held, from the Constantinople correspondent of *The Standard* on the 3rd of this month:—

> "The alarm inspired at the Yildiz Kiosk at the possibility of a break-up of the Concert of Europe is on the increase, and, in view of the present situation, a most important special Commission, consisting of six members—four Turks, one Armenian and one Greek—has been sent to Tokat to hang off-hand all whom the members are unanimous in finding guilty."

That was an extremely significant fact, because, as far as he could see, the Sultan of Turkey was the only man who had displayed any great alarm or fear that the Concert of Europe might break up, or who seeemed to be disposed to place any very extreme value on that Concert. As to the present condition of

Crete, they had been hearing from the Under Secretary for weeks, he might say for months past, optimistic statements in the House that the condition of affairs was rapidly progressing from good to better. In spite of these repeated statements, the condition of things had steadily gone from bad to worse. A very remarkable letter appeared in yesterday's *Observer* from an English gentlman who had just returned from the interior of Crete. Speaking of the proceedings of the Powers there, he said:—

> "They allow the Turkish troops, the Bashi-Bazouks, and the men-of-war, to attack the Christians, and burn houses and churches, but they immediately bombard the Christians when they fight against the Turks even in self-defence. The consequence is, that they are rapidly reducing the island to a state of anarchy. What else could be expected from intrusting the management of negotiations which require skill, tact and patience to half-a-dozen peppery sailors, whose only idea of diplomacy is a proclamation of an amorphous autonomy, tempered by spasmodic bombardments?"

It was a mockery and an absurdity for Members of the Government to stand up, day after day, and declare that their one object is freedom in Crete and peace in Europe, when all their proceedings had a manifest tendency to create anarchy in Crete and war in Europe. With regard to the blockade, if it was true, as was stated on excellent authority, that the supplies of food were running short, and that it was peaceable inhabitants who were suffering most, he wanted to know on what grounds the Government could defend such conduct? According to Mr. Thomas Sandwith, who was for many years the British Consul in Crete,

> "in 1878, when the interior of Crete was altogether in the hands of the insurgents, the peaceful Christian peasantry were allowed free access to the garrison towns in order to purchase provisions,"

because the Turkish Vali

> "strongly condemned the policy of starving women and children, and the Porte acquiesced in his view."

Yet the Concert of Europe was now engaged in what the Turkish Vali refused to do in 1878. The answer which the Under Secretary of State gave on the 7th of April to his question as to whether the Admirals had made any arrangement to allow provisions to reach the inhabitants of Crete was most insulting and cruel. According to the Crete correspondent of *The Observer*, while the Admirals would not allow food to be sent to the Christian troops or into the interior, they allowed food to be freely landed for the Turkish soldiers, and in some of the villages the Christians were already reduced to such straits that they were feeding on the roots of wild plants. Was that a decent condition of things to prevail through the operation of the British ships and the blockade carried out by the Christian Powers of Europe? In Candia, Retimo, and in other towns around the coast, the Turkish troops and irregulars were going out and pillaging Christian villages, knowing that when the Christian insurgents pressed them too hard they could retire under the protection of the troops of the Powers. It was idle for the Government to say they were operating in Crete in favour of the liberty of the people and were not taking a side. They were taking the side of the Turkish troops, and endeavouring to bring the insurgents to surrender. At present no sympathiser with the insurgents could ask them to lay down their arms. The insurgents would be fools to lay down their arms; indeed, what they had now to trust in were their rifles and the support of the Greek troops. In his opinion it was the duty of every man who had sympathy with a struggling people, and who valued liberty, to protest on every available occasion against the attempted starvation of the insurgents, and against the blockade and bombardment of Crete.

Mr. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) said that of the hon. Member for East Mayo it might be truly said that, if he was not necessarily in favour of insurgents all over the world, by some curious chance he always happened to find himself in sympathy with people who were fighting against this country—[Hon. Members: "This country," *and Opposition cheers*]—in favour of people whom he erroneously imagined to be enemies of this country. [Mr. Dillon: "Are the Cretans and Greeks enemies of this country?"] It was not long since the Mahdi was highly popular with the hon. Gentleman and his political associates, and it was, therefore, only natural that Colonel Vassos and his men should have inherited some little popularity. The hon. Member had frequently charged the Government with taking the side of the Turk. The hon. Gentleman was not a humorous or frivolous person; if he were one would be inclined to suppose that the charge was made in jest, for really a more preposterous statement it was impossible to imagine. If the Government had erred at all it seemed to him they had erred in showing partiality towards the Greeks. They rejected the original proposal to blockade the Greek ports, they allowed the landing of Colonel Vassos and his men, and they lately proposed, so it was understood, that the Greeks and the Turks should simultaneously withdraw their forces from Crete. It had always seemed to him that the Greeks had one legitimate grievance against the Government, and that was that they were permitted to land in Crete at all, because ever since Colonel Vassos and his troops were allowed to land we, in conjunction with the other Powers, had been endeavouring to turn them out. But apart from that the Greeks had no grievance at all. The Turks had, in his opinion, maintained an extremely correct attitude, but he found nothing to admire in the conduct of the Greeks—indeed he found nothing to admire in the conduct of the Greeks during the last 20 years. It had been said that in this business the Greeks had acted a noble and disinterested part. Assuming that they invaded Crete for the purpose of freeing its inhabitants, the Cretans were at this moment free; they had been practically free from the moment the first detachment of European troops landed in the island. Autonomy had been proclaimed. Why, therefore, did not Colonel Vassos and his troops withdraw? It was contended they were there to restore order. Hon. Members understood what that meant. It meant they were remaining there in order to organise annexation. It was also contended that there was nothing the Cretans desired so much as annexation with Greece. He did not believe it. A nation preferred to govern themselves to being annexed to other countries. As a matter of fact, he believed that on several occasions during recent years the Cretans had expressed their desire to be placed under a British protectorate. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members might laugh, but he would refer them to Mr. Stillman, *The Times*' well known correspondent in Rome, who knew the Cretans better than any person in the House; and, moreover, he believed his statement would be corroborated by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. [Mr. Curzon: "Hear, hear!"] Any hesitancy on the part of the Cretans to express a wish for independence was easily explained; it was owing to the fact that the Greek troops and the emissaries of Greek secret societies had absolute control of the island. Because the Greeks were not allowed to annex Crete they were desirous of making war on the Turks in Macedonia. It was asserted by many of the correspondents in Athens that the Greeks would be quite ready to abandon all claim to Crete if they obtained an accession of territory in Macedonia. If that were so, what became of their humanity and patriotism? Under such circumstances why should we, or any other European nation, shrink from resorting to coercion if it were necessary? The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean asked whether they were prepared to sacrifice the King of Greece by their action? It was highly probable that the dynasty was in danger. The King, no doubt, found himself in a very unpleasant position. But that was a question of minor importance. Dynasties in the Balkan States came and went. It was by a pure accident that his noble Friend, one of the junior Lords of the Treasury, was not at this moment Crown Prince of Greece. [*Laughter.*] Instead of being Crown Prince of Greece he was chairman of the Kitchen Committee—[*laughter*]—no doubt a position of dignity and responsibility. Could it be seriously urged that, for dynastic considerations, we were to leave the European Concert? ["Hear, hear!"] He was astonished that the right hon Baronet, a gentleman with pronounced Radical views, should, for such a reason, advocate this course. Everybody knew the extraordinary and almost insane distrust and suspicion that prevailed on the Continent with regard to this country. Could they imagine anything more calculated to increase that distrust and want of confidence than that we should leave the European Concert at this moment? ["Hear, hear!"] It would instantly be said that we got out of the difficulty for our own profit and advantage. The Cretan question, important as it might appear, was really only a small incident in the whole Eastern question. The Ambassadors had for some time been occupied in elaborating a general scheme of reforms to be applicable to the whole of the Turkish Empire. These reforms were necessary, not only for the welfare of the subject races of the Porte, but for the maintenance of the peace of Europe. Were right hon. Gentlemen opposite ready to destroy this hope because they approved of the action of a recalcitrant Power at the present moment? They were told that there were only six Members of the Party opposite who were prepared to dissent from that policy; and he should expect to see them drummed out of the Party for refusing to bow the knee to the Liberal Forward programme. But he honestly and firmly believed that if the Leader of the Opposition had been in office during the last few weeks he would have acted in precisely the same way as the Government had done, and would have followed the very course which he had denounced that night. [*Cheers.*]

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.) said they had obtained the minimum of information from the Government on the darker aspects of the Eastern question, and had failed to elicit what their policy was. The Leader of the House told them that the European Concert had done something, but he did not say what. So far as the Liberal Party were concerned, if the European Concert would do anything for good they would be all in favour of it. But during the last three years they had been unable to see that it had done anything at all for good. The only thing it had done was to compel the resignation of the will and power of this country into the hands of the other European Powers. If he had to choose a text on which to speak on this subject he would quote the words uttered by Lord Rosebery last year. What did he say?

> "Diplomatic pressure is not limited to war or bombardment or blockade. No one can read the recent correspondence without seeing that as regards the idea of putting pressure upon the Sultan there has been an absolute destitution of any idea except to get the other Powers to join with us in putting pressure upon him, and, when that fails, there has been an absolute negation of any action at all."

The policy of Her Majesty's Government had not changed since those words were uttered, and he did not suppose that Lord Rosebery had changed his mind. The Government had not explained why they objected to the union of Crete with Greece. They said that they were prepared to give to Crete the constitution of Samos, but not the position of Cyprus or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Surely that was a very fine distinction to make, having regard to the consequences involved. ["Hear, hear!"] The object of the Government was supposed to be the prevention of a general scramble; but by refusing the union of Crete with Greece they were doing their best to bring it about. The Turks and Greeks were facing each other on the frontier, and a catastrophe might occur at any moment. The right hon. Gentleman had thrown no light on the question with respect to which the Opposition had sought for information. All they knew of the scheme of autonomy was that the Cretans were not to have the right to choose their own chief. What were the Powers going to do about Colonel Vassos, who was provisioned for months? Were the ships of the Powers to blockade Crete all through the summer. [*Cheers.*] And in that blockade, was England to do the work of Europe? England had 15 ships engaged in the blockade, and the other five Powers had only 13 altogether.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: That is not so. The Italians alone have 12.

AN HON. MEMBER: Are they torpedo boats?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The Italians have five ironclads there.

MR. H. GLADSTONE said that he accepted the correction. He had taken his figures from *The Times*, and in future he should be more careful in quoting *The Times* as an authority. ["Hear, hear!"] At any rate, we were providing more ships than any other Power. What was Germany doing? Germany took the lead in the policy of the blockade. How many ships had she sent?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: One. [*Derisive Opposition cheers.*]

MR. H. GLADSTONE said that, after all her furious fulminations against Greece, Germany could only send one ship and had sent no soldiers at all.

[*Cheers.*] We had to bear the brunt of the task. But if Colonel Vassos were dislodged—and 30,000 or 40,000 men would be necessary to do that—who was going to take in hand the reorganisation of a conquered country? The Government had given no indication as to how the crisis on the Greek frontier was to be stopped; and the necessary conclusion was that neither the Government of this country nor those of the other Powers knew how to settle the question. They were drifting along from day to day without any definite policy, and trusting to the Concert of Europe to do something, although for the past three years it had failed to do the very thing for which it was brought into existence. [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY and Mr. LABOUCHERE rose together, each looking to the other to give way.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I am not going to make a long speech.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: Nor am I. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LABOUCHERE having given way,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square), said: I only rise, as the Leader of the House is unable to speak again, to remind the House that there was an arrangement come to, with the general assent of both sides, that this Debate should close about Ten o'clock. The Government had originally intended that the Necessitous School Board Bill should be taken this evening, and, if necessary, continued to-morrow. But for the general convenience, and in deference to the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, it was settled that the School Board Bill should be postponed, that this Debate should conclude about Ten o'clock, and that the Agricultural Board (Ireland) Bill should be introduced to-night. I am sure both sides will feel that effect should be given to an arrangement so come to. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. LABOUCHERE said that he was not going to make a long speech. But the other day the Leader of the House had compared him to an eminent Nonconformist divine—[*much laughter*]—who preached 40 sermons from the same text. If he thought the 41st sermon would have more effect with the Government than the preceding 40 he might attempt it, but he could not hope for that. The Resolution before the House was that the House should adjourn for a fortnight. In view of the thorough distrust which hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House had for Her Majesty's Government, and in view of the serious crisis in the East, with the possibility of something occurring which might precipitate us into war, he did not think that the Parliamentary eye should be closed on the Treasury Bench. [*Laughter.*] He liked a holiday just as much as hon. Gentlemen opposite, but there were times when private pleasure must yield to public business. [*Loud Ministerial laughter.*] This, he was sorry to say, was one of them. Under these circumstances, he begged to move as an Amendment to omit the words "That this House at its rising do adjourn until Monday 26th April." [*Laughter.*]

CAPTAIN PIRIE seconded the Amendment.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 210; Noes, 49.—(Division List, No. 170.)

The announcement of the figures was received with loud Ministerial laughter.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) entered a protest against the general course which the Government had adopted in the conduct of their business up to Easter, and he asked for some information as to the course of business for the remainder of the Session. The Government had enjoyed unexampled opportunities in the conduct of their business; no one on his side of the House had endeavoured in any way needlessly to embarrass them. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] The Government had made a series of distinct pledges on the question of Irish education, but the question was now no nearer a settlement than it was three years ago. Again and again the Government had also promised to deal with the Irish Universities, and the First Lord of the Treasury had this Session pledged himself to deal with the question. The right hon. Gentleman had asked for a specific pledge from the Irish Members and the Irish hierarchy that a seat of liberal learning should be established in Ireland in which the arts and sciences would be taught, and whether the Bishops in Ireland were in a position to meet Her Majesty's Government on that point. It had been stated in officious newspapers which supported the Government that the failure to deal with this question had been due, not to the Government, not to the Lord Lieutenant, not to the Chief Secretary, but to the Irish hierarchy. He gave an emphatic denial to that statement, and he said that the failure to deal with the question rested upon those who had broken faith in the House and with the Roman Catholics in Ireland. As this question had remained unsolved ever since the right hon. Gentleman issued his memorable election address at Manchester ten or twelve years ago, he should like to know how much longer the pledge was to remain unfulfilled. As to the Bill for the Board of Agriculture, the Government had not been pressed by the Irish Members to bring it in, and the Government were not pledged to deal with the subject.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will not be in order in referring to the Bill which is down on the Paper.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that the Irish Secretary, to whose conscientiousness he desired to pay every tribute, had recently told his constituents that his desire was to bring home to the minds of the Irish people the fact that the Government of this country were their friends and not their foes. He did not himself regard the Government as the friends of the Irish people, but rather as their enemies. [*Laughter.*] His mind was open on the question, and he desired that the Government should remove his prejudice if they could do so. This Session they had had only few opportunities of discussing the policy of the Government, and such opportuities as had been given them had generally been abridged by the Closure. To-night, at a time when the Government were about to spend further sums—at the demand of a very respected Member, it was true, of their own Party—why were the voices of the 80 Catholic Members from Ireland disregarded, and the Government's own pledges derided? [An hon. Member: "Are they all Catholics?"] Greatly to their honour, some Nationalist constituencies had returned a group of 12 or 13 Protestants, who were just as much in favour of a settlement of this Education question as the Catholic Members were. In connection with educational matters, the Government were in the hands of the little Orange clique returned from the north-east corner of Ireland. No English Member had protested against the establishment of a national University for Ireland, but all through Ireland, ever since the First Lord of the Treasury made his speech, the tap of the Orange drum had been heard, and the Government were asked whether they were going to place education in Ireland under the control of the Pope. [Mr. Wolff: "Hear, hear!"] That, of course, was cheered by the eminent Irishman opposite who sat for Belfast. [*Laughter.*] What was the Irish policy of the Government to be during the remainder of the Session? The Government had refused the Nationalist Members every concession in connection with the subject of education; they had trampled on the Treaty of Union as their forefathers trampled on the Treaty of Limerick, and they had disregarded their own pledges given in that House. Yet they professed to wonder why the Irish people distrusted them. The failure of the Government to keep their pledges respecting education was in no sense due to the action of the Irish Bishops, who had been quite willing to endeavour with the Government to arrive at a solution of the question in no narrow or bigoted spirit. If nothing had been done the fault lay with the faithlessness or powerlessness of Her Majesty's Ministers.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) rose to ask leave to introduce a Bill for establishing a Department and a Board for the purpose of promoting agriculture and other industries in Ireland. He said that if the hon. and learned Member for Louth was under the impression that the Government had not promised to bring in a Bill for establishing a Board of Agriculture in Ireland, he was in error. The intention of the Government to introduce such a Measure was announced in the Queen's Speech in 1896, and a Measure had atcually been drafted at that time. Want of time and opportunity, however, prevented the introduction of the Bill, but he could not altogether regret the delay that had occurred, because it had enabled the Government to take advantage of the valuable and interesting Report of the Recess Committee, which was published after that Bill had been drafted. No one could doubt that that was a very remarkable document indeed. In a country like Ireland, where political divisions and differences were so strongly marked, it would, he thought, be admitted that it was singular and indeed phenomenal to find a body of men representing every shade of political opinion co-operating together as in this case. He thought that every one of the Committee was to be congratulated on that fact, particularly his hon. Friend (Mr. Horace Plunkett). He thought that little short of a revolution had been accomplished. They had carefully considered the Report of the Committee in regard to the Bill to be introduced that evening. If they had not been able to adopt all the recommendations in their precise form it was not from any want of sympathy. He would first direct their attention to the title of the Bill. It was a Bill for establishing a Department and a Board for the purpose of promoting agricultural and other industries in Ireland. The House would observe that there was a distinction drawn, and it might be asked what were the functions and constitution of these bodies respectively. As was well known, the functions exercised in connection with agriculture in Ireland were distributed amongst five or six different departments. There were the Privy Council, the Land Commission, the Board of National Education, the Board of Works, the Registrar-General's office, all of which were intrusted with powers and duties connected with agriculture. It was proposed to transfer them to the new Department. It was also provided that there was to be practically a new Minister, so that it would be seen that the new Department corresponded to the Agricultural Department for England. But it was not desired that it should be confined to agriculture. It was styled in the Bill a Department for Agriculture and Industry in Ireland. The Bill as it stood did not perhaps convey a full justification for that title, for so far as industry was concerned it did not give powers to the Department beyond what were involved in the transference to the Department of the powers and duties of the Registrar General in reference to the collection of certain statistics and also certain powers of co-operation which the Department possessed in the industrial work of the Board. But it was the intention of the Government, he trusted, during the present Session, to introduce a Measure, intended to supplement the present Bill, providing for industrial technical education in Ireland. He was authorised by his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that he was prepared to provide a substantial sum for the purpose of aiding industrial technical education in Ireland, and the administration and allocation of that sum would be assigned to the new department. So far as its agricultural functions were concerned, the new department had for its counterpart the Board of Agriculture of England; but there was no counterpart in England for the new Agricultural Board they proposed to create. The nearest analogy to the new Agricultural Board was to be found in another Irish institution formed six or seven years ago—namely, the Congested Districts Board of Ireland. The Agricultural Board was intended to perform for Ireland generally duties and functions analogous to those now performed by the Congested Districts Board for the congested districts of Ireland. He wished to make it perfectly clear that this Board was not to be secondary to or dependent in any way upon the Department. On the contrary, it was to be a perfectly independent Board with a separate corporate existence. It was not to be subjected either to the Treasury or to the Irish Government. ["Hear, hear!"] It was to have a perfectly free hand, subject, of course, to the provisions of the Act and the control of the Auditor General, with the funds placed at its disposal, and it was to have the power to appoint and dismiss its own servants. The powers and functions of the Board covered, roughly speaking, the whole field of agriculture, fisheries, home and cottage industries, and also included the promotion of technical instruction in those subjects.

MR. CARSON asked, were the functions of the Fishery Commissioners to be transferred to the new Board?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the Fishery Commissioners had certain judicial functions, and it would be inconvenient for their duties to be transferred to an administrative department of the Government. The Board was also to be intrusted with certain special powers, such as the improvement of land by arterial and other drainage. The Board was to consist of not more than 12 members. Three of the members were the President and the Vice President of the Department and the Agricultural Commissioner. The other members, to a number not exceeding nine, were to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, like the members of the Congested Districts Board, as far as possible irrespective of Party, and with a view to the functions and duties they were to discharge. It would be seen that, so far, the Government had followed very closely the analogy of the Congested Districts Board, both in regard to the functions and the constitution of the new Agricultural Board. The question would naturally arise whether it would not be better that the two Boards should be amalgamated. That matter had been under their careful consideration, and he thought a great many arguments might be urged in its favour, but this Board was a new Board which they were creating as an experiment, whereas the Congested Districts Board was an established institution which so far had been a remarkable success. [*Cries of* "No!"] So far as it had gone it had been a remarkable success. He should not like to put into this Bill a provision for amalgamating the two Boards unless he was assured that there was a general agreement on the part of the Irish Members that such an amalgamation was desirable. So far as the Bill was drafted they had left the Congested Districts Board as it now stood, save that the Vice President of the Department of Agriculture would be henceforth a member of that Board. There was one novel principle which they had introduced to which no counterpart was to be found in the case of the Congested Districts Board, although the principle had been given effect to in several Continental countries, and he believed in every case with great success. The Board was directed to draw up, with the approval of the Lord Lieutenant, regulations for the formation of a consultative council, which should consist partly of members representing agricultural societies and organisations, and partly of members to be nominated by the Lord Lieutenant, who would naturally represent agricultural interests. He thought it would be generally recognised that the success of such a Board as they proposed to set up in this Bill would largely depend upon whether they could get into real and close touch with the people whose interests it was intended to benefit. ["Hear, hear!"] It would also depend very largely on the extent to which they could utilise organisations and societies such as those which already existed in Ireland, and which he hoped might be multiplied as time went on. It was absolutely necessary for the Board, if it was to be really efficient in its action, to be in close touch with the people. He did not think it was likely that any difference of opinion would arise as to the necessity of working through organisations. That, in his opinion, was absolutely proved by the experience of foreign countries, and the elements of that were set forth in the Report of the Recess Committee. It might be a platitude to say that the most difficult persons to help were those who could not or would not help themselves; but in practice it was sometimes forgotten that in Ireland farming for the most part was done on a very small scale, and it was absolutely necessary, if the farmers were really to be put in a position to help themselves, that it should be done through organisations and co-operation. In spite of some conspicuous exceptions, very valuable work was done in Ireland by associations like the Royal Dublin Society and the North-Eastern Agricultural Society; but it must be admitted that in agricultural organisation and co-operation Ireland was still backward as compared with many agricultural countries on the Continent. The exertions of his hon. Friend the Member for South Dublin had already done something to produce a very desirable change in that direction, and he believed that the creation of a Board of Agriculture such as he had now sketched out, assisted in its deliberations by a consultative council, would have the effect of promoting to a very large extent the formation of new organisations and societies. These smaller organisations would enable the Board to come into touch with the people of the country generally in the very way to which they attached so much importance.

Mr. DILLON asked what would be the powers and functions of the Council?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Merely consultative. The idea was that it should meet so many times a year in conference with the Board, that the latter might be fully informed of the views and desires of the farmers in Ireland generally and their organisation.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): What will be the means at the disposal of the Board?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said he was coming to the question of finances. But he was on somewhat difficult ground pending the Report of the Financial Relations Commission. Hon. Members from Ireland should separate polemical questions from the questions raised in this Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Give us our money.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR reminded hon. Members from Ireland that the funds provided for the Congested Districts Board came from the Irish Church Fund. That was Irish money, and he doubted whether Parliament would have intrusted to the Board power to deal with it, without the interference of Parliament, if the money had been Irish money. [*Nationalist cheers.*] There was a great deal of force in that. The Board of Agriculture would have a perfectly free hand to deal with the funds at its disposal, and it was thought those funds should be derived from money earmarked in Ireland. So it was proposed that there should be paid to the Board all the sums paid to the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account pursuant to the Local Taxation (Ireland) and Estate Duty Act of last year accruing after March 21 of the present year. That would give to the Board the use of an income of about £150,000 a year, subject to certain sums which they either had to spend for the benefit of the congested districts or to hand over to the Congested Districts Board.

Mr. KNOX asked if that sum would be in addition to the money now spent?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR replied that the sums at present spent would continue to be provided under the ordinary Votes. If the money spent with the consent of the Congested Districts Board amounted to or exceeded £20,000 annually, there would be no further sum payable from the Board of Agriculture to the Congested Districts Board. In addition to this sum there would also be at the disposal of the Board that portion of the Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund reserved by the Land Purchase (Ireland) Act of 1891 for expenditure elsewhere than in the congested districts—a capital sum of £20,000. There was also to be paid to the Board in respect of the duties of the Board of National Education in Ireland an annual sum of £6,000 out of moneys provided for Ireland. As he had already explained, it was the intention of the Government in creating this Board to stimulate and encourage as far as possible the self-help of localities, and with a view to that result provisions had been inserted in the Bill enabling grand juries and boards of guardians to raise special rates for the purpose of carrying out schemes approved by the Board, provided always that the rate so raised should not in one year exceed the sums granted by the Board in aid of the same scheme. He had described the functions and constitution both of the Board and of the Department, and the sources from which the funds to be supplied to the Board were to be derived. He had now only to add some reason for making this distinction between the Board and the Department and to explain their relation to each other. The ordinary powers of the Board and of the Department respectively were sufficiently distinct to prevent the probability of any friction between them. A provision, however, had been introduced enabling both the Department and the Board to cooperate with each other in the discharge of their respective functions. The fact that the three Members of the Department were also to be Members of the Board, would, he trusted, insure harmony and unity of action between the two. It would be seen that the Board and the Department were in this way connected, but at the same time were separate from and independent of each other. What the Government had aimed at was centralisation and organisation of the various functions connected with agriculture which were now scattered among the different Departments, and, on the other hand the extension to Ireland generally of advantages analogous to those which were now conferred on congested districts by the Congested Districts Board. ["Hear, hear!"] It would, no doubt, have been open to the Government to have proceeded upon somewhat other lines. They might have created a Department and also assigned to it the work of the Board; or, again, they might have created a Board and assigned to it the work of the Department only and attached to it a consultative Board possessing advisory but no executive or administrative powers. All these courses had been carefully considered, and the Government came to the conclusion that none was really adapted to the end they had in view. It appeared to them that the work they had assigned to the Department could not be wisely intrusted to the Board, and, on the other hand, that the work of the Board could not be satisfactorily carried out by the Department. The Board was an independent Board. It was not controlled by the Minister who had to preside over it, it was not to be responsible to Parliament, and he did not think it would be wise to intrust to such a Board the administration of Acts of Parliament like the Diseases of Animals Act, under which a considerable amount of public money had to be spent, and which involved the making of a great variety of orders for the compulsory slaughter of cattle, for compensation, and so forth. He did not think these were duties which could properly be intrusted to the Board it was proposed to create; nor did he think it quite fair to the large body of Civil Servants, who, under this Bill would be transferred from the Departments to which they now belonged to a new Department under a Board not responsible to Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] For the work intrusted to the Department it was, in the judgment of the Government, essential that there should be ministerial responsibility and official administration. But, on the other hand, the rigidity of official adminstration, following as official administration did the strict line of precedent, would be ill-adapted to the work intrusted to the Board. The usefulness of the Board would depend to a large extent upon its getting closely into touch with the people it was intended to benefit. Its work would be essentially internal in character, and work of an internal character was not performed very usefully with the rigid methods of administration which were necessarily characteristic of a Government department. What they wanted, therefore, to secure was more elasticity of method, freedom of action, and popular sympathies. These were secured in the Congested Districts Board, and it was to a large extent because they were so secured that that Board had been so successful in the work it performed. ["Hear, hear!"] The third plan, that of creating an executive department, and attaching to it an advisory or consultative body, might be open in a greater or lesser degree to the drawbacks mentioned, and which were incidental to the performance of such work as was assigned to it. The whole of the responsibility would rest on the shoulders of the Minister, and the Board would be reduced, probably, to a nonentity. The Minister would be responsible to Parliament, and necessarily would proceed in the most cautious and tentative manner; and, being exposed in the administration of large expenditure on all sides to political pressure, would in all probability find it necessary for his protection to resort to hard-and-fast rules of action. He thought the plan of a consultative or advisory Board might probably be adopted with advantage in the case of the allocation of the funds for technical education, but would not be equally well adapted to work like that now carried on by the Congested Districts Board. Even with the success of the Congested Districts Board, he was sensible that the proposals involved an experiment, and in some respects a novel experiment. They were bound to face the possibility of it turning out a failure, and they had made provision for that eventuality by providing that the Board might be dissolved by Resolution of both Houses of Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] In that case the Department would become its executor, dealing with its assets and obligations, but personally he looked forward with hope and confidence to the real issue being very different to that. He was convinced that the road to prosperity for rural Ireland lay in the improvement of her methods of agriculture, now wofully backward, and in the encouragement of home industries, which could hardly be said at the moment to exist, along which road other countries not dissimilar in general circumstances, employing methods similar to those now proposed, had already travelled as pioneers, and he saw no reason to believe that the success which those countries had achieved should not be the measure of the success which might fairly be anticipated by following in this track. [*Cheers.*] He formally moved for leave to introduce the Bill.

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport) thought Irish Members would excuse him for interposing for a few minutes, he had a special interest in the subject. It appeared to him a bad omen that at the very birth of this proposal provision should be made for its funeral. The right hon. Gentleman, though anticipating the success of the proposal, made provision for its failure, and he also, in his closing remarks, made the statement that improvement in Ireland depended on the development of her agricultural and other industries. That was common to every country.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I spoke of rural Ireland, and her home or cottage industries.

Mr. KEARLEY said if the object was merely to bolster up the home and cottage industries of Ireland time would be wasted on the Bill. He had thought the Government had some profound scheme in view to really develop Ireland's prospects agriculturally considered. That the Bill was intended to develop Irish agriculture he understood, but something in addition was required, some reduction of the heavy burden Ireland bore at the present time. But that was not the question he rose to deal with, and it would be dealt with by those who more thoroughly understood that aspect of the question. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that the very able Report of the Recess Committee came to him, as possibly it did to many others, as a revelation.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I did not say it came to me as a revelation.

Mr. KEARLEY understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that Report was a revelation.

Mr. DANE: He said he read it and appreciated it.

Mr. KEARLEY said he had noted the words the Report was a revelation. It was a revelation, no doubt, but, when it was considered how the interests of Ireland had been intrusted to a miscellaneous collection of Boards, it was no wonder that agriculture in Ireland had been crippled, and for years had hobbled along to no advantage. It appeared to him that this new Board would be a political Board in every sense of the word, instead of being, as it should be, a business Board to deal with a business question. They were to have a Commissioner of Agriculture in addition to nine other gentlemen, who would be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. He would like to know what would be the duties of this Commissioner?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said he would be a permanent official of the Department and a member of the Board.

Mr. CARSON: Will he receive a salary?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Not as a member of the Board, but as the official head of the Department.

Mr. KEARLEY: Will these nine other gentlemen receive a salary?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No.

Mr. KEARLEY asked what class these other nine gentlemen were to be selected from. Were they to be selected for their knowledge of the question; would they be agriculturists, or traders, or what? It was very necessary they should know this. It appeared to him that the functions of the Department were very wide—much wider than they anticipated. They were to have control of the fishery question. That seemed to be a very big question, and he was inclined to think that they would not have full charge of that question. He should like to know how much of it they were to have control of? The home and cottage industries, he was afraid, were not sufficiently important to set up an official body of this description for. What was really wanted was a practical body dealing, and knowing how to deal with, the possibilities of this agricultural development. If they were going to aim in Ireland at a similar success to that which had been achieved in Denmark, then there was a great deal to be said for the proposal, provided it was not weighted with officialdom and expense. Then he would like to know if this Department was to have entire charge of the adulteration question. The right hon. Gentleman was probably aware that there had been a large number of prosecutions in consequence of the excess of water in Irish butter. There was a disposition amongst the Irish Members to regard Ireland as being exempt from the conditions that were to and would prevail shortly, he believed, elsewhere in the production of this article of butter. He assured Irish Members that they would do themselves the greatest possible injury if they encouraged that idea at all. He trusted that if the Department were set up it would deal stringently with the question of adulteration, because it was perfectly impossible for Ireland to prosper as an agricultural country unless it could be thoroughly established and made clear to the distributors and consumers of Irish products that those products were pure. If the Department did no better work than that it would do a very good work for Ireland. He noticed that the Board was to draw up regulations for the consultative council. What were to be the functions of the consultative council? It would give advice, no doubt, but was it to take the responsibility of finding markets for the produce of Ireland? In the latter direction the committee of the hon. Member for South Dublin had done excellent work. The great difficulty in Ireland had been that the small producer had been absolutely at the mercy of the middleman, and it would be a very good thing if the Department took steps to protect all kinds of producers, so that they might get the best results for the articles they produced. In Limerick, Cork and Waterford there were regular rings working to the detriment of the small producers. Middlemen in those places made huge sums, while the producers barely made a profit. The right hon. Gentleman said the success of the Board depended upon whether it could get in close touch with the people. What people did he mean? The small farmers only, or with the distributors and consumers as well? £150,000 was to be spent. That was a handsome sum, but it would require to be very carefully dealt out, or else there would be no practical result. If it all went in schemes it would be wasted, but if it was properly applied it would be of the greatest advantage to Ireland. He believed it would be rather difficult to get localities to rate themselves to develop industries when the benefit would go, not to them, but to private individuals. They were told this was an experiment. He honestly and sincerely hoped it would not be a failure. It was a step in the right direction, and, so far as he was concerned, without pledging himself to details, he would endeavour to support the Bill as far as he could.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he did not think any Irish Member would complain of the hon. Gentleman, whose action in taking an interest in this question was in strong contrast with the action of his leaders, who were conspicuous by their absence. He did not think any Member, much less an Irish Member, would be inclined off-hand and without seeing the Bill in print, to express a full opinion upon its value. The Chief Secretary had dwelt upon the value of the Report of the Recess Committee, and emphasised the fact that that was a body representing all shades of political opinion in Ireland. But if there was one thing more emphasised than another in the Report, it was the necessity of bringing the proposed Department into close touch with the people. The right hon. Gentleman himself had admitted the desirability of doing that, and yet in the Bill there was a complete absence of any popular representation. For his part, he did not see the necessity of having two bodies. It would have been quite possible to have had one body, and to have popular representation upon it, so that it would have commanded the confidence of the great bulk of the people.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No popular representation is recommended in the Report of the Recess Committee.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: It provided for the creation of councils, the majority of which would be elected by the people. It is true the Bill contains a provision that the Board may frame rules for the creation of Consultative Councils, with the approval of the Lord Lieutenant, but it is quite clear that that is a power which may never come into operation at all.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Board is bound to frame the rules.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said the Lord Lieutenant would not be bound to approve of them. It was quite clear that if it had been the intention of the Government to give popular representation they would have enacted it as a substantive part of the Measure. This was an example of the method by which Ireland was governed. Nationalist Members, when they brought forward Irish Measures, were told that they only represented a section of the people. But here they had all classes and sections of political parties absolutely united in demanding a Measure, and the English Government, in the airiest possible manner, put their recommendations aside. He was a member of the Recess Committee, and he was most anxious for an effective Measure in helping Irish agriculture and industries. He did not wish to criticise the Government unfairly, but only to get a good Bill for Ireland. One statement made by the Chief Secretary would be regarded with general satisfaction, and that was the undertaking that almost immediately the Government would introduce another Bill dealing with technical education in Ireland. But the broad fact in connection with the finance of the Bill was that Ireland was not receiving a penny from the Imperial Treasury. Ireland was simply allocating her own money to a particular use. Irishmen could not forget that while under the statute of last year Ireland received £150,000 a year, she would, if treated on the same principle as England, be receiving from £700,000 to £800,000 a year. He would not say whether the Government's proposals represented the best method of spending the £150,000. No doubt if it were devoted to relief of rates, the individual advantage would be very small, and he was prepared to spend it on other useful purposes. But the First Lord of the Treasury had declared that the Bill was introduced before the Easter holidays in order that it might be discussed in Ireland during the recess. Well, if the representatives of every class, party, and creed in Ireland were unanimous in wishing for certain changes in the Bill, would their wishes be considered, or would they be disregarded like the recommendations of the Recess Committee? Generally he was in thorough sympathy with the attempt to aid agriculture and industries in Ireland, and with the expenditure of money, even Irish money, upon the purpose, and his one desire would be to make the Bill workable, so that, when it finally passed the House, it might be likely to confer a real benefit on the people of Ireland.

Mr. EDWARD CARSON acknowledged that the Chief Secretary had shown himself thoroughly anxious to master the difficulties that arose by reason of Ireland being a purely agricultural country. He suggested, however, that before the Bill was issued an attempt should be made to make the part of the Bill relating to administration much more simple. When would they be done with setting up new departments in Ireland? [*Nationalist cheers.*] What always happened was this, that according to the exigency of the case a new department was set up, something was transferred from an old department, and the old department goes on as merrily as before. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Then they had Members on both sides rising when financial questions were brought up and blaming them because of the great extravagance and the great expenditure in Ireland. While he had no doubt that this Department might be useful as the Congested Districts Board was—and he desired to bear his testimony to the great work performed by that Board—he would like to see some attempt made in the Bill to consolidate some of those Departments. He could not see any reason why the work should not have been carried out by one Board and one set of individuals. He did not see any objection to a Minister being appointed to sit in the House, but he would have preferred to see a new Minister for Ireland, who would have been answerable for all the various Departments connected with land in Ireland. Then he thought that on future occasions they would have some interesting questions as to the administration of the land laws in Ireland generally. But he entered his most emphatic protest against the finance of the Bill. [*Cheers.*] He was a warm supporter of the attitude of the Government in relation to the financial question in Ireland, but they could not have it both ways. The Government must either treat Ireland as a part of one country, or they must treat it as a separate country. [*Cheers.*] He complained that this £150,000 which had been cynically called an equivalent grant was entirely inadequate, according to the principles laid down in the Bill of last year, for the relief of agriculture in England. He could not understand why the remedies provided in that Bill for depressed agriculture should not apply to a country which was purely agricultural. [*Cheers.*] Why was the money to be put to a different purpose from that in England? Were Irish tenants not groaning under the grand jury cess in Ireland, just as English tenants were groaning under county cess in England. The only pretext for adopting a different mode of legislation was that people imagined that because the tenantry of Ireland got reductions in their rents out of the landlords' pockets it was not necessary to give relief out of Imperial funds to the relief of local rates. He protested against this principle of differentiating between the two countries. He was anxious to see this new Board established in Ireland, but he would not be satisfied until a really equivalent grant was given to Ireland for the relief of agricultural ratepayers. Why was that not done? In the Irish papers he saw resolutions day after day, which were passed not by landlords only, or tenants only, but by the representatives of both these bodies, by grand juries as representing the landlords and by tenants the agricultural associations—resolutions calling upon the Government to give them the same relief in respect of their rates as was given last year to agricultural districts in England. All parties in Ireland were united in this demand, and he did not see any justification for withholding the relief for which they asked. He thought the Government, while adhering to this Bill and providing the £150,000 for setting up the new Department, might very well undertake to pass a Measure giving to Ireland the equivalent of what was given to England last year. This was not a demand which came merely from one side of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] Landlords and tenants in Ireland were thoroughly agreed upon the subject. The landlords had no wish to see benefits conferred upon tenants in this country withheld from tenants in Ireland. The better off the tenants were the better it was for all concerned.

MR. T. M. HEALY congratulated the right hon. and learned Gentleman on the patriotic speech which he had made—["hear, hear!"]—and trusted that it would penetrate the minds of Her Majesty's Government. He ventured, however, to tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that in a matter of this kind he was regarded by the Government only as a mere Irishman like the rest of them. As long as the right hon. and learned Gentleman was doing the work of the Government in Ireland his voice was a potent voice in their estimation, but the moment he spoke on behalf of Ireland, his efforts were derided and his utterances were disregarded. He should like to know with regard to the Bill whether it was to be a take-it-or-leave-it Bill? Was that the category in which it was to be placed? Was it to have precedence of the Bicycles Bill or the Criminal Evidence Bill? [*Laughter.*] What was the position of the Government with regard to the Bill? The case of Ireland was so simple that it was ridiculous. They spent a million a year to teach children in Ireland the height of the mountains in Switzerland, and similar rubbish, and now, when they were grown up, they were going to spend £150,000 on teaching them all about liquid manure. [*Laughter.*] The nomination of the 12 men who were to spend the £150,000 under the Bill was placed entirely in the hands of that admirable nobleman who came from Chelsea—Lord Cadogan. When the Lord Lieutenant nominated the Land Commission he was torn to pieces by the Irish landlords in his own Chamber over the way. How then could he hope to satisfy that insatiable and irreconcilable body the Nationalists, in the nomination of the 12 apostles of agriculture? [*Laughter.*] Either Ireland was a separate entity or she was not. He believed that, according to the present state of the

Government mind, she was not a separate entity. Accordingly she was regarded as part of this great country, and it was asked, why should they not be prosperous like Yorkshire? Why should they not be satisfied like Wiltshire? Why should they not be happy under the glorious Union Jack for which they paid £40 a year to hoist over Westminster? But he would ask any Englishman who was opposed to Home Rule to explain to him as an honest man, or as a financier—he did not care which—[*laughter*]—how Ireland was not entitled to the same equivalent grant as England, which some people would put at a sum of £700,000 a year? And yet there were opposite a number of Gentlemen who would go down to their constituents and say how dissatisfied those Irish were, what rapperees they were—here was England pouring bounties upon Ireland from her cornucopia, or her pharmacopœia—he did not know which it was—[*laughter*]—and she was not satisfied—their quack medicines could not satisfy her. Was not the reason that Ireland was only a separate entity for coercion, and other alms of that kind, and that when it came to fiscal gifts the attitude of England towards her was that of a stepfather? Under this scheme this money—not England's money—was to be administered by a Board of 12 gentlemen. How did the English deal with their agricultural matters? They introduced an Agricultural Bill, which he was not aware was one bit better than this Bill, but in spite of that they had since given relief in respect of half of the agricultural rates. [*Irish cheers.*]

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the Board of Agriculture in England corresponded to the Department of Agriculture created by this Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY mentioned a number of Acts relating to agriculture which had been passed in England, but of which they in Ireland had had no counterparts. There were a number of Acts relating to the contagious diseases of animals, they were not to have the benefit of those. He would skip the Tithe Rent Act, as Irishmen, of course, were not to be trusted with their own money. Then there was the Copyhold Act, the Labourers Act, the Enclosures Act, and the different Acts relating to commons. They would like in Ireland to deal with their own commons. If there was one thing they would like to deal with in Ireland it was the question of drainage. There was a remarkable series of Drainage Acts, Improvement Acts, Land Acts, Public School Acts, and Enfranchisement Acts, all applied to England, and the Government thought, when dealing with Ireland and creating what they were pleased to call a popular body, that the Irish people would be satisfied with this miserable thing presented to them. He should have thought that, in dealing with this matter, which, at all events, was Irish, the Chief Secretary would have invited the Irish Members to have met him in one of the Committee rooms upstairs, and said to them, "I have £150,000 of your money in my pocket, and I should like to know what you would like me to do with it?" But he consulted two or three people at the Castle, whom the Irish people had never seen, whose very names they did not know—still their salaries appeared on the Estimates—and he went to Leeds and asked the Irish people to trust him, and he supposed that by intuition and two years' experience he could penetrate into the minds and hearts of the Irish peasants. The Chief Secretary was admitted to be conscientious and hardworking, yet there was never a more powerless Minister. He was not in the Cabinet, which was a crying shame. When the smallest Irish Bill was presented he had to consult Lord this and the other, who were thinking of Crete and Armenia, and never gave a thought to Ireland unless they saw a murder in Ireland reported in *The Times.* He ought to consult Irish opinion, and, having done that, be in a position to set the Cabinet and the Treasury at defiance. Only in that way would he be successful in administering the affairs of Ireland. He believed the right hon. Gentleman knew what was the cure for Ireland. What was wanted was a native Government, and yet the right hon. Gentleman and his Party made this tinkering compromise. The only way of dealing with Ireland was either to rule her as a Crown colony and a conquered nation, or give her a free Parliament. There was no other means, and it was useless for the Government to think that by making these tinkering sops and doles they could satisfy Irishmen. When they had their own little Parliament in Ireland what were their taxes? £1,000,000 a year, and they were now £8,000,000. What they wanted was to be relieved out of the £7,000,000 England was now robbing them of. That was the Irish question, and that was the only form of an Agricultural Board that would ever satisfy them.

Mr. DILLON said there were two points connected with the Bill on which Irish opinion would be absolutely unanimous. The first of these was the financial basis. He entirely agreed with the right hon. Member for Dublin University that all parties in Ireland would unite in condemning the financial proposals of the Bill. In the Queen's Speech of last year the Government promised an Irish Agricultural Board, and in redemption of that promise it was the duty of the Government to provide out of the Imperial funds the expenses of that Board. They had not done so, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman he would quickly discover that on the financial question there was absolutely no difference of opinion in Ireland—that landlords and tenants, Ulstermen and Munster men, Unionist and Nationalist, would be agreed in condemning this as an exceedingly shabby trick towards Ireland. They claimed their full equivalent grant in relief of the rates in Ireland. As the Government had taken off half the rates of the English farmers, they ought to do the same

for the Irish farmers, which would amount to a sum roughly estimated at about £700,000 a year; and, in addition, whatever the expenses of this Board proved to be, they ought to be honestly and frankly provided by the Government out of what was really an Irish fund, though it was nominally out of the Imperial Exchequer. The second point to which he wished to allude was as to the constitution of the Board, and he again agreed to a large extent with what had been said by the right hon. Member for Dublin University. He believed that there would be almost universal condemnation of the utter absence of any popular element on this Board. The Board, the right hon. Gentleman said, should be in touch with popular feeling; but how could it have any popular representation if all the 12 members were to be appointed by Dublin Castle? It would be nothing more nor less than another Castle Board. The three official members would rule the roast, and it would be a mockery to call this an independent body; it would be under official control, and there was no pretence of popular representation. No good purpose, however, would be served in attempting to discuss the details of the Bill now.

Mr. HORACE PLUNKETT (Dublin Co., S.) said on the question of finance there would be general agreement among Irishmen; but from the other questions raised by the hon. Member finance might be kept entirely separate. Let the other provisions of the Bill be looked at quite apart from the source from which the money was to come. Upon the other point there seemed to be some misconception. The hon. Member appeared to assume that the Lord Lieutenant would appoint an unpopular Board, or a Board of which the farmers could not approve; but there was no warrant for assuming that, and he would have no object in doing so. A sum of money would be handed over to the Board, and the Board would be able to do very much as they liked with it; it would not matter to the Government. An entirely new spirit seemed to be arising in Ireland on these questions. Even the hon. Member for Louth had come out as an industrialist, and he brought in a Bill the other day of which everybody approved—an industry Bill; and, in spite of hon. Members' condemnation of the action of English Governments towards Irish Measures, he believed it had a very good chance of becoming law.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No. I will bet you. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. PLUNKETT said he would confer with the hon. Member as to that outside the House. He believed that in the Recess this Bill would receive close attention, and out of the criticism would come suggestions for Amendment that he had great hope the Government would accept. Undoubtedly the Bill would make a considerable demand on Parliamentary time. He had every reason to believe that the Government were in earnest about this Measure, and he wished to accord his most grateful thanks to the Chief Secretary for his labours in this matter, and to wish him every success in this very fruitful and useful legislation.

Mr. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) said that, as representative of an agricultural constituency, and also a member of the Recess Committee, he desired to thank the Chief Secretary for the honest labour he had devoted to this Bill. He said candidly that with some parts of the Measure he was disappointed, but he must also honestly admit the great difficulties with which his right hon. Friend had to contend. It was no simple task for a Chief Secretary, holding the responsible office he did, to tackle the large number of Departments in Dublin Castle which had held sway for so many years, and the heads of which naturally resented any interference with their office. He thought the Chief Secretary had laboured hard to meet the recommendations of the Recess Committee, and he cordially thanked him for what he had succeeded in doing under very great difficulties. When they came to the financial part of the Bill, he saw, not the gentle hand of the Chief Secretary, but the iron hand of the British Treasury, and he for one must protest in the strongest manner against what he believed was another injustice towards Ireland perpetrated by the British Treasury.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Fermanagh might have made a more effective protest had he supported the Instruction which he himself moved last year to the effect that the Agricultural Rates Bill should be extended to Ireland. At present they were very much in the position of shutting the stable door after the horse was stolen, but, in view of the unanimity of the protest, he did not despair that, although a great act of injustice towards Ireland was proposed, Irish Members would be able to penetrate the hide of the British Treasury. The Government had paid half the rates of the English farmer, and they proposed to give to Ireland as an equivalent £150,000 a year, which was to be spent in salaries and for other purposes by a Board in Dublin. Take the position of an individual farmer in Donegal. He calculated that if half the rates of the Donegal farmer were paid for him by the Treasury he would be able to raise his store cattle 15s. a head cheaper than he could raise them to-day. Could even the most enthusiastic advocate of this Agricultural Department say that it was likely to enable the Donegal farmer to produce his store cattle 15s. cheaper than at present? The peasantry of Ireland would be able to understand the hard fact that the most needy agriculturists of the kingdom had been deprived of a benefit which was given to the richest farmers in this country. It was impossible for them to separate the financial part of the Bill from the rest. It was the root of the whole matter, and if they did not protest strongly against it they would be told that they had acquiesced in the creation of these new places and salaries. As to the other part of the Bill, so far as he could understand, it did not transfer a single highly-placed official from any other department in Ireland to this new Board. He felt bound as an Irish Member to protest against the creation of a large number of salaried posts unless there was some reduction of these posts in other directions.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the introduction of the Bill, and still more on the promise of an auxiliary Bill, which would be received with the greatest satisfaction in the North of Ireland. But there would be a general consensus of opinion in Ireland with respect to this financial question, and though he did not advocate the expenditure of a larger sum on this purpose, that was not the end of the matter. He could not admit that this allocation was exhaustive of the claim of Ireland on the joint fund of the United Kingdom. The fact that the city of Belfast unanimously supported the Government on the Financial Relations question was of some value to the Government in the position which they took up; but that support would not be extended to the absolutely contradictory proposition involved in the refusal to Ireland of her equivalent to the Agricultural Rating Act. It was impossible for him to contend to his constituents that there was no obligation on the Government to extend to Ireland the treatment which had been given to England. They had a right to ask on what grounds it was that, agriculture being distressed both in England and Ireland, the same principles of relief were not adopted in the two countries? It was useless to urge that the vote in aid of education in Ireland was to be held as part discharge of the obligation to Ireland; for that education grant was made antecedent to the allocation of the equivalent grant. It would be against his convictions to support this allocation of the money, and Irish Members would be unanimously of his opinion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour and the Attorney General for Ireland; presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Monday 26th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 204.]

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND [CONTRIBUTION].

Considered in Committee.

Resolved,

"That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to contribute, out of the Revenues of India, such sums as may be required to meet certain liabilities under any Act of the present Session to make provision for the transfer of the Assets, Liabilities and Management of the Regular Widows' Fund and of the Elder Widows' Fund to the Secretary of State in Council of India."

Resolution to be reported upon Monday 26th April.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the Third time and passed.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION [CHARGE].

Considered in Committee.

Resolved,—

"That it is expedient to authorise the charge on the Revenues of India of any addition to the Superannuation or Retiring Allowances, which may become payable under any Act of the present Session to remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to Officers on his Establishment."

Resolution to be reported upon Monday 26th April.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) moved:—

> "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Commissioners of Works under any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of Land for the Extension of the Patent Office, and for purposes connected therewith."

Mr. T. M. HEALY protested against this constant system of plundering Ireland to pay for English needs.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked how much money was needed?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that the acquisition of land would not cost more that £8,000 or £9,000, but the Resolution provided also for the cost of any arbitration under the Lands Clauses Acts—a matter of £200 or £300.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 131; Noes, 11.—(Division List, No. 171.)

Resolution to be reported upon Monday 26th April.

RAILWAY ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Considered in Committee.

SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCE TO ASSESSOR OF RAILWAYS, ETC., AND CLERKS, ETC., EMPLOYED BY HIM.

Clause 1,—

> On and after the *passing of this Act*, the assessor of railways and canals for the time being (hereinafter referred to as the assessor) appointed in terms of section twenty of the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act 1854, and the clerks or other officers whom he may be allowed to employ permanently in the execution of his duties under that Act, shall each be entitled to such superannuation allowance as may be fixed by the Secretary for Scotland, not exceeding *ten sixtieths* of his annual salary, with the addition of *one sixtieth* for every additional completed year of his service beyond *ten years.*
>
> Provided as follows:—
>
> (i.) The allowance shall not, except as hereinafter mentioned, be granted to any person unless he has served for a period of *ten years:*
>
> (ii.) The allowance of any person shall not exceed *forty sixtieths* of his annual salary:
>
> (iii.) The allowance shall not be granted to any person under the age of *sixty years*, unless he produces a medical certificate to the satisfaction of the Secretary for Scotland that he is incapable, from infirmity of mind or body, to discharge the duties of his situation, and that his infirmity is likely to be permanent:
>
> (iv.) The allowance of any person shall be calculated on the amount of annual salary received at the time of retirement, if he shall have been in receipt of the same, or in the class from which he retires, for a period of at least *three years* immediately before retirement; and in all other cases it shall be calculated on the average amount of annual salary received during the three years next preceding the retirement, such average to be fixed by the Secretary for Scotland.

Mr. CALDWELL moved to leave out the words "On and after the *passing of this Act.*" He protested, amidst derisive cheers, against proceeding with the Bill at that hour. The present railway assessor received his appointment on the footing that he was to get the salary attached to the office; but there was no provision whatever for a superannuation allowance. The object of this Bill was to give a superannuation allowance to this assessor. The effect of the Bill, therefore, would be to place the assessor, who was in the position of a judge, and who ought to hold the balance equally in disputes between railway companies and local authorities, under an obligation to the railway companies which promoted the Bill conferring a superannuation allowance on him.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: Order, order! The principle of the Bill was decided on the Second Reading. The hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Amendment he is moving.

MR. CALDWELL (who spoke amid continued interruption) said he would explain the Amendment if he was allowed just half-a-minute. As far as the present assessor was concerned, if the Bill giving him a superannuation allowance were passed he would not be in that position of independence which he ought to be in—

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Order, order! I told the hon. Gentleman he was not in order in discussing the general principle of this Bill, which has been already decided by the House. He is moving an Amendment, and he must confine himself to that Amendment.

MR. CALDWELL said if the assessor were appointed on the footing that he was to get a superannuation allowance that was a matter of contract. But without any compromise whatever a gift of this kind ought not to be given. He begged to move his Amendment.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said he could not accept the Amendment. The present assessor had been a very estimable public servant, and it would be very unjust to deprive him of his chance of getting a superannuation allowance.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 127; Noes, 15.—(Division List, No. 172.)

MR. CALDWELL moved, after the words "Secretary for Scotland," to insert the words "with the consent of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury." The hon. Member pointed out that the superannuation allowance was to be fixed by the Secretary for Scotland. He thought if the Secretary for Scotland fixed the superannuation allowance it should be with the consent of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, because the matter of superannuation was more within the Department of the Treasury, especially as they appointed the assessor.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said he did not propose to accept the Amendment, because he thought it was quite useless. The calculation of the scale of superannuation was automatic. The whole basis was framed on the Treasury scheme, by which a man got so many sixtieths of his salary, so that what he should get was a mere arithmetical calculation. The Secretary for Scotland was better able to judge whether a person was entitled from his services and otherwise to get a pension, and there was no use to call on the Treasury as guardians of the purse, because they did not pay him.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Does this Bill place this assessor in the same position as the other assessors?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: No; the other assessors are prefectly different. The Assessor of Railways is in a position entirely by himself; the other assessors —valuation assessors—are not paid by the Government at all, but by the counties.

MR. CALDWELL said the Lord Advocate was quite in error in representing that under the Bill the superannuation was nothing more than an automatic scale of so many sixtieths, because Clause 2 gave an option to the Secretary for Scotland to add so many years to a man's services as he might think fit, to an extent not exceeding 20 years. If there was power to add to the extent of 20 years' service, and if there was to be that discretion, the Committee would see the Lord Advocate was not correct when he said the Secretary for Scotland had simply to act as a clerk, adding the years' service according to automatic scale.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said the Secretary for Scotland would be quite as well able as the Commissioners of the Treasury to act in such a case.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. CALDWELL said that in dealing with the position of assessors in Scotland the Committee had to deal with a position very much the same as the position of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, with which the House dealt last year. It was then decided that Chairmen of Quarter Sessions should not get retiring allowances until they had completed 15 years' service. This was not like the case of retiring Civil Servants who had to complete a certain number of years' service; these officers were in a similar position to the Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, and he therefore moved to leave out the word "*ten*," and to insert the word "*fifteen*."

*The LORD ADVOCATE said the Bill was modelled from the general Act, which applied to all Civil Servants, the 22nd Vict., to which the position of those Gentlemen bore more analogy than to the case the hon. Member had mentioned.

Question put, "That the word 'ten' stand part of the clause."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and on his decision being challenged said, it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 173.)

Mr. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont): On a point of Order, may I ask whether the hon. Members who supported your decision may have their names taken? [*Loud laughter.*]

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: The Standing Order says the names of the minority shall be recorded.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will it be in order to move that the Standing Order be amended?

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: Yes, at the proper time. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. CALDWELL rose to move another Amendment when,

Mr. DUNCOMBE claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS declined then to put that Question.

Mr. CALDWELL proposed to leave out the word "*sixty*," and to insert the word "*sixty-five*."

*The LORD ADVOCATE said that in this case also the Bill followed the general Act dealing with Civil Servants. He would like to remind the hon. Member that some persons become incompetent long before 65. [*Cheers and laughter.*]

Question put, "That the word 'sixty' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and on his decision being challenged said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 15, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 174.)

Mr. CALDWELL rose to move another Amendment, when

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS ruled that the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member was no Amendment at all. [*Laughter.*] The words proposed were the same as those in the Bill. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. CALDWELL moved, in paragraph IV. to leave out the word "*three*," and to insert the word "*five*."

Mr. DUNCOMBE: I rise to a point of Order. The hon. Member is reading his speech. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. CALDWELL: I am reading the Bill. [*Laughter.*]

*The LORD ADVOCATE said that in this respect also the Bill followed the general Act dealing with Civil Servants.

Question put, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and, on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 175.)

Question put, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall), who spoke seated, and amid loud interruption and derisive cheers, said that he wished to raise a point of order. A right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Mr. Seale-Hayne) had not risen in the last Division, either to support or to challenge the Chairman's decision, and he asked whether it was competent for a Member within the House to abstain from voting?

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: There is no necessity for an hon. Member to rise at all. The Standing Order simply says that those who support the decision of the Chairman shall rise, and that those who challenge it shall also rise. There is no power to compel an hon. Member to rise who does not wish to do so. [*Cheers.*]

Question again put, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and, on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 13, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 176.)

Clause 2,—

COMPUTATION OF ADDITIONAL YEARS TO ASSESSOR.

In the event of the assessor, when appointed as aforesaid, being of an age which would not entitle him, on attaining the age of sixty years, to a superannuation allowance under this Act of forty-sixtieths of his annual salary, the Secretary for Scotland may, by order under his hand, direct that on the retirement of such assessor a number of years not exceeding *twenty* shall, in computing the amount of his superannuation allowance, be added to the number of years during which he may have actually served as assessor.

Mr. CALDWELL moved to leave out the word "sixty," and insert the word "sixty-five."

*The LORD ADVOCATE opposed the Amendment, stating that there was a precedent for the Clause in the general Act.

Question put, "That the word 'sixty' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and, on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 177.)

Mr. CALDWELL proposed to leave out the word "*twenty*," and to insert instead thereof the word "*five.*"

*The LORD ADVOCATE said that 20 years was the number in the 4th Section of the general Act.

Dr. CLARK thought it was an extraordinary power to give to the Secretary for Scotland. Ten years would be sufficient.

Question put, "That the word '*twenty*' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 121; Noes, 13.—(Division List, No. 178.)

Question put, "That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and, on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 179.)

Clause 3,—

LIABILITY OF PERSONS UNDER SIXTY TO BE CALLED UPON TO SERVE AGAIN.

Every person to whom a superannuation allowance shall have been granted under the provisions of this Act, before he has attained the age of *sixty years*, shall, until he has attained that age, be liable to be recalled to the office of the assessor to serve in the same or a similar capacity to that in which he has previously served, and, if he shall decline, when called upon to do so, to return to such duties, or shall decline or neglect to execute such duties satisfactorily, being in a competent state of health, he shall forfeit his right to the superannuation allowance which has been granted to him."

Question put, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and, on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 180.)

Clause 4,—

ALLOWANCE NOT TO RUN CONCURRENTLY WITH SALARY.

Nothing herein contained shall entitle any person to receive any superannuation allowance under this Act concurrently with salary or other remuneration in respect of his performing the duties of an assessor or of clerk or other officer in the employment of such assessor.

Mr. CALDWELL proposed after the word "assessor," to add the words "or in any employment the payment for which comes out of the Imperial Treasury or out of local rates."

Question put, "That those words be there added."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 13; Noes, 124.—(Division List, No. 181.)

Question put, "That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 14, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 182.)

Clause 5,—

SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCE FOR OTHER SERVICES TO BE CONSIDERED.

In fixing the amount of superannuation allowance under this Act, the Secretary for Scotland shall take into consideration the amount of the superannuation allowance, if any, granted to the assessor in respect of any service under Her Majesty's Government.

MR. CALDWELL moved after the word "assessor," to insert the words, "and other persons."

MR. DUNCOMBE: I think we have a right to claim from the Leader of the Opposition some declaration of his policy. [*Laughter.*]

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 13; Noes, 122.—(Division List, No. 183.)

Question put, "That Clause 5 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee proceeded to a Division.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS stated that he thought the Ayes had it, and on his decision being challenged, said it appeared to him that the Division was frivolously claimed. He accordingly directed the Ayes and the Noes successively to stand up in their places. It appeared that the Noes were 13, and the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it.—(Division List, No. 184.)

Clause 6,—

MODE OF LEVYING AND COLLECTING ALLOWANCES.

All superannuation allowances to be granted under the provisions of this Act shall be levied and collected along with and in the same manner as the remuneration or salary of the assessor and his clerks and other officers, as prescribed in section twenty-nine of the said Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act 1854.

Question, "That Clause 6 stand part of the Bill," put and agreed to.

Clause 7,—

SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Act 1897.

Question, "That Clause 7 stand part of the Bill," put and agreed to.

Question put, "That the Bill be reported without Amendment."

MR. T. M. HEALY said he had been asked to make some remarks. He desired to express their joy that they were parting with non-contentious business, and that their votes had been weighed instead of counted.

Bill reported, without Amendment.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE moved, "That the Bill be now Read the Third time."

DR. CLARK proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words, "upon this day six months."

MR. T. M. HEALY seconded the Amendment, which he thought most reasonable. His main objection to the Bill was that Ireland should have to pay for a Scotch assessor.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The assessor is paid by the railway companies. [*Laughter.*]

MR. T. M. HEALY strongly objected to the Third Reading being taken now. The Bill had not proved a non-contentious Measure. [*Laughter.*]

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 72; Noes, 12.—(Division List, No. 185.)

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill Read the Third time, and passed.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of this day, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at Twenty Minutes after
Three o'clock in the Morning
till Monday 26th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 26th April 1897.

The House re-assembled after the Easter holidays.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): To call attention to the duration of Speeches in Parliament; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 11th May.*]

INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY (JUDICIAL DUTIES, EXPENSE).

MR. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth): To call attention to the expense incurred by the Incorporated Law Society in performing the Judicial Duties imposed upon it by 51 and 52 Vic., c. 65; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 11th May.*]

MR. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) gave notice of a Motion in precisely similar terms.

CROWN LANDS AND COMMONS (WALES).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To call attention to the administration of Crown Lands and the appropriation of Common Lands in Wales; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 18th May.*]

QUESTIONS.

BOTTLING BEER.

MR. R. McKENNA (Monmouth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the bottling of beer is such a process as to constitute any premises in which the same is carried on a factory or workshop within the meaning of the Factory and Workshops Acts, 1878 to 1895?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The point raised by the hon. Member is not free from difficulty, but I am advised that the Acts do apply in the places mentioned, and they are actually enforced there.

METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAYS.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the excessive overcrowding of the carriages of the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, he will suggest to those Companies that the bye-law approved by the Board of Trade under which a passenger is liable to a fine for travelling in a carriage of a class superior to that for which he is booked should be relaxed when he is unable to find a seat in the class of carriage for which he has taken a ticket?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston, on behalf of Mr. RITCHIE): No, Sir. I understand that my right hon. Friend is not prepared to make the suggestion referred to in the Question to the railway companies, as he doubts whether it would act as a remedy for overcrowding. As a matter of practice, the Board of Trade understand that the companies do not prosecute except in clear cases of intent to defraud.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked whether it had not already been decided that under the bye-laws of the railway companies the overcrowding of first class carriages by third class passengers was a trespass in respect of which first class passengers could recover damages?

MR. HANBURY: As the Question of the hon. Gentleman has only just been put into my hands, I am unable to answer it.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (LEWIS).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the fact that the Atlantic seaboard of the island of Lewis is not included in the North Sea Convention, he will state the reason why the Fishery Board for Scotland fails to make a bye-law to render beam and otter trawling illegal within 13 miles of that part of the Lewis Coast?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I have already answered this Question to the hon.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Member, but shall repeat my answer. While the Atlantic seaboard of the Island of Lewis is not included in the limits of the North Sea as fixed by the North Sea Convention, 1882, it is not permissible for the Fishery Board for Scotland to make a bye-law rendering beam and otter trawling illegal within 13 miles from that seaboard, as the 10th Section of the Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act, 1895, requires that the sanction of the States Signatories of the Convention be obtained before any bye-law operative within the 13 mile limit can be made on any part of the Scottish coast. The Fishery Board has consequently no power to make the bye-law suggested. On a reference to the 1st Sub-section of the 10th Section, it will be seen that the language employed is as follows:—

> "The Fishery Board may by bye-law or bye-laws direct that the methods of fishing known as beam trawling or otter trawling shall not be used in any area or areas under the jurisdiction of Her Majesty within 13 miles of the Scottish coast," &c.;

while the 3rd Sub-section contains the following enactment, namely:—

> "Provided that no area of sea within the said limit of 13 miles shall be deemed to be under the jurisdiction of Her Majesty for the purpose of this section unless the powers conferred thereby shall have been accepted as binding upon their own subjects with respect to such area by all the States signatories of the North Sea Convention, 1882."

POST OFFICE (HYDE).

Mr. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, when the new post office at Hyde will be commenced, what sum has been taken for it in the Estimates, and what amount it is intended to spend upon it; and whether, seeing that nearly 10 years ago the late Mr. Raikes inspected the present post office and pronounced it to be inadequate for the requirements of Hyde, an effort will be made to complete the building at the earliest possible date?

Mr. HANBURY: Provision to the extent of £1,840 is made in the Office of Works Estimates for the current year for commencing the erection of the new post office at Hyde; and it is intended that the work shall be begun as soon as the purchase of the additional piece of ground, which is being acquired from the Corporation, has been completed. The estimated cost of the building, including fittings and furniture, but excluding site, is £2,855. It is understood that the late Mr. Raikes visited Hyde in 1890; but since that date, the old office has been enlarged and improved to some extent.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact that the effective branch of the Army Medical Department is and has been for some time much below its authorised strength; whether the cost of the non-effective branch of the Army Medical Department is now nearly equal to, if it does not exceed, the cost of the effective branch; whether he is aware that many of the medical officers who now retire on a pension at the early age of about 45 are willing to remain on the active list; and whether he will take steps to retain on the active list medical officers who now retire in the prime of life, but who are willing to remain on the active list?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): The establishment of officers of the Army Medical Staff has been below strength, and there are now about 40 vacancies. The non-effective charge is only about half of the effective charge. Medical officers who retire at the age of 45 do so voluntarily, and there is no power to retain them in the service against their will; but they are liable to be recalled to service up to the age of 55 if emergency arises.

Dr FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): May I ask whether it is not the fact that the compulsory clause does not take effect until the officers are 55 years of age?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: That is the fact. Those who retire at 45 retire voluntarily, and all who retire at that age are liable to come up for service if emergency arises.

POSTAL FACILITIES (NEWTOWN CUNNINGHAM, CO. DONEGAL).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a memorial has been received from Newtown Cunningham, in County Donegal, urging a reconsideration of the answer given last year to an application for further postal facilities in that district; and whether the Postmaster General has yet decided to accede to the request?

Mr. HANBURY: A memorial has been received from Newtown Cunningham, Co. Donegal, urging a reconsideration of the answer given last year to an application for further postal facilities. The Postmaster General was glad to be able last year to accelerate the morning delivery at Newtown Cunningham by about an hour, and thus to meet to some extent the wishes of the memorialists. But the establishment of a second post, which would involve additional expense, was not found to be warranted, the cost of maintaining the existing service already absorbing the whole postal revenue available. The circumstances have in no way altered since the question was previously considered, and the Postmaster General is still unable to accede to the memorialists' request.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS ACT.

*Mr. **J. CARVELL WILLIAMS** (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will lay before Parliament the circular of the Education Department to the managers of Voluntary Schools relative to the carrying out of the provisions of the Voluntary Schools Act, with the accompanying Minute and forms of inquiry?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir John Gorst, Cambridge University): The Minute was laid on the Table of the House before the holidays. It is not usual to present the circulars of the Department to Parliament; but if the hon. Member wishes, it will be produced.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS asked when the Minute would be delivered?

Sir J. GORST: It is a question for the printers.

REPLY LETTER CARDS.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that Mr. Merridew's amended project of reply letter card for international postage is free from the alleged fiscal objection raised concerning it, which would appear to have no foundation in fact; whether his attention has been directed to the fact that under the proposed system reply letter cards could not be purchased in the cheapest market, as suggested, to the detriment of the British postal revenue; and whether, in presence of the safeguards provided, the Postmaster General would favour the scheme, and direct the British postal delegates to support the adoption of the proposed reform at the coming Postal Union Congress?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General does not regard the amended project as free from the fiscal objections already explained, and cannot undertake, on behalf of a single stationer interested in a particular device, to give any such instructions as are suggested. But the House may rest assured that whatever scheme is put forward at Washington will be discussed on its merits.

TELEGRAPH OFFICES (BANK HOLIDAYS).

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he could see his way to close the smaller telegraph offices on Bank Holidays at the same hours as on Sundays?

Mr. HANBURY: A number of the smaller telegraph offices in towns where there are several are already altogether closed on Bank Holidays, or closed at the same hours as on Sundays; but the Postmaster General fears that much inconvenience to the public would be caused if village telegraph offices which are at a considerable distance from other offices were closed at the same hours as on Sundays.

FRENCH TROOPS IN BAHR-EL-GHAZEL.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether it is the case, as recently stated by M. Richard Waddington in the French Senate, with the apparent assent of the Minister of the Colonies, that French troops under Lieutenant Liotard now occupy a portion of the Bahr-el-Ghazel, and have probably by this time reached the Nile; and (2) whether Egypt continues to assert her right to the territory thus crossed by a French military expedition, which was the subject of lease by the Earl of Kimberley to the Congo State, and from which the Congo State officers were withdrawn upon representations to that State by France?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): We have so far received no confirmation of the statement referred to in the first paragraph of the Question. The Egyptian Government has not relinquished any of its claims to territory in the basin of the Upper Nile.

ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND).

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Returns showing that nearly 50,000 children were in the year 1896 in average attendance at Roman Catholic day schools in Scotland, as against 510,000 in the public schools; that nearly 10,000 scholars were in average attendance at Roman Catholic evening continuation schools as against less than 40,000 in the public schools; and that £21,543 was received by these schools from voluntary contributions, being more than double the total amount of the voluntary contributions of all other sections of the people of Scotland to educational purposes; whether he is aware that the parents of the children in the Roman Catholic schools have further to contribute as ratepayers to the support of the public schools in which Presbyterian catechetical teaching is given, but receive no aid from the rates; and whether the Government will, under the circumstances, give to the Scotch Voluntary Schools an equivalent measure of redress to that which has been given to the Voluntary Schools of England?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The condition of Voluntary Schools in Scotland is under the consideration of the Government, and will not be lost sight of in any proposal which the Government may bring forward on the subject.

GREECE AND THE POWERS.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is prepared to make any statement to the House in relation to the war between Turkey and Greece, and the policy of Her Majesty's Government in relation thereto, whether the British Fleet is still engaged in the blockade of Crete, and whether that blockade is directed against the Cretan insurgents or against the Greek belligerents in the island? [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman I have to say that Her Majesty's Government, like the rest of the Powers, have agreed to an attitude of neutrality as between the combatants. They are, of course, desirous, as soon as a favourable opportunity presents itself, of offering their good offices as mediators. [*Cheers.*] With regard to the second Question of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of the blockade of Crete, the Powers, having already assumed the occupation of the littoral of the island before the outbreak of the war, have determined that it shall be considered neutral. The blockade is maintained for the purpose of preventing opposition to their authority.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will a proclamation of neutrality be issued?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I believe that that is the usual course, and no doubt it will be followed in the present case. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to a report which has appeared in several of the newspapers that during the recent battles between the Turks and the Greeks several wounded Greek soldiers who fell into the hands of the Turks were shut up in a Christian church to which the Turks set fire, burning both the Church and the wounded Greek soldiers, and whether he can confirm or deny the truth of the Report?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, may I ask him whether his attention has been called to a statement in to-day's newspapers that great cruelties have been inflicted on captured Turks by the Greeks, amongst other things by placing live coals upon them?

MR. CURZON: My attention has not been called to either of the reports mentioned by the hon. Gentlemen, and the Foreign Office has no information either corroborating or contradicting them.

MR. MORTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Standard* of the 21st inst. that the Turkish Embassy in London have asserted that certain Englishmen, including officers of the British Army, have volunteered to fight on the Turkish side in the present war, and whether he is able to state that such report is true or not?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question—[*ironical cheers and laughter*]—may I ask whether the statement is true that Captain Birch and a number of Englishmen have volunteered their services and are fighting on behalf of the Greeks? ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

MR. CURZON: I must give the same answer to both Questions that I gave before—namely, that we have no information on the subject.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING IN THE MORAY FIRTH.

MR. WEIR asked the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the fact that the *Jackal* was stationed at Aberdeen to prevent the landing from the German trawler *Alster* of fish caught in the prohibited waters of the Moray Firth, he would state whether a cruiser had been sent to the Moray Firth to protect the interests of the line fishermen during the temporary detention of H.M.S. *Jackal* at Aberdeen?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The *Alster* left Aberdeen on Saturday. Her destination was said to be Hull, and I believe that she has arrived there and discharged her cargo. I am not aware that there is any necessity for the further protection of the Moray Firth, and I do not apprehend that H.M.S. *Jackal* will be detained much longer in Aberdeen.

RAILWAY ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said that he desired to bring under the notice of Mr. Speaker a question affecting the procedure of the House in regard to what took place at the last sitting. It appeared from the printed Votes and proceedings which were delivered to hon. Members on the morning of the commencement of the recess, that in the course of the sitting of the previous day the Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill passed through Committee, and that thereupon a Motion was made and the Question proposed that the Bill be read a Third time. An Amendment was proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." A division was taken with the result that 72 voted Aye, and 12 voted No. The object he had in bringing the matter forward was that he was always under the impression—and he thought most hon. Members shared the same impression—that, unless with the general consent of the House, no stage of a Bill could be taken at any one sitting other than that stated on the Order Paper for that day. He was aware that there had been occasions on which this general rule had been departed from. He himself remembered in one of the early divisions in which he took part in 1866 that the Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland) Bill was introduced, passed through all its stages in this House, sent to the other House, and the Royal Assent communicated to this House in the course of the same sitting. But apart from legislation promoted on the ground of urgency of a national character, the general practice had been undoubtedly as he had stated it. He quoted from the "Rules, Orders, and Forms of Procedure relating to Public Business," and from May's "Parliamentary Practice," and said that having looked at all the references to cases cited, he found they were all cases where obviously the consent of the House was given. The question had been raised before now as one of order, with the result that a decision by Mr. Speaker's immediate predecessor had been delivered, and also one by Mr. Speaker Brand. Mr. Speaker Peel, in August 1890, said:—

> "It frequently happens late in the Session, when urgency is in the nature of the case, that two or more stages of one Bill are taken at the same sitting";

and he went on to say that,

> "it is not a question of leave of the House, but of the vote of the House. Acting on that opinion, and in accordance with other precedents, I have myself on two occasions—the only occasions I can recall—done so."

Looking at all the decisions one by one, he thought it was clear that the only cases in which an exception had been made to the general practice had been when a Measure had the general assent of the House, or was promoted on the ground of extreme urgency, as in the case of the Bill of 1866. He drew attention to the matter because he thought that in the future it was by no means improbable that majorities drawn from one side or the other might be tempted not only to do what had been already done to obviate altogether the Report stage by resisting all Amendments, but to take advantage of the principle which would be established, that immediately, at the same sitting, a Motion would be made for the Third Reading of a Bill. He desired also to draw attention to the special conditions under which the sitting upon that day was being conducted, owing to the specific Order of the House embodied in the Motion for the Adjournment for the holidays, which ran as follows:—

> "That the Government business, as far as and including the Order for the Committee on the Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, may be entered upon this night at any hour, though opposed, and be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House; and that, so soon as such business is disposed of, Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without question put."

Therefore, although he did not attach so much importance to that breach of order as to the departure from general practice which he had first mentioned, he submitted that the taking of any stage of the Bill in question, except for Committee, was a distinct breach of the specific Order of the House made at the commencement of that sitting. That being so, he desired to ask Mr. Speaker whether the proceeding in question was regular, or whether there were special features in the particular case which would not enable it to be quoted as a precedent in the future?

*MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps I had better state first my recollection of what actually did take place at the last sitting of the House. The Bill referred to passed through Committee after a discussion of some two hours, and when I came into the Chair, the Motion was made "That the Bill be now read the Third time." No objection was taken on the point of order to the Third Reading, but the hon. Member for Caithness immediately rose in his place, and proceeded to move that the Bill be read a Third time that day six months. An hon. Member, in supporting that Amendment, did object, not by way of raising a question of order, but as a matter of argument, to the Third Reading being taken the same night of a Bill which, he said, was a contentious Bill. Therefore the particular point which the right hon. Gentleman now takes was never raised. But as the right hon. Gentleman asks me what my ruling would have been, assuming objection had been taken, I may say that I do not understand the Rule to be as broad as he seems to suggest. There is no absolute rule that the Third Reading cannot be taken immediately after the Report without the universal assent of the House. It is the more ordinary practice of the House—which, probably, it would desire to continue in the majority of cases—that only one stage should be taken at a time; and, in the case of a really contentious Bill, debated between the two sides of the House, two stages should not be taken at the same sitting. With regard to the ruling to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, in which Mr. Speaker Peel gave an opinion that it was not a question of leave like the withdrawing of a Motion, but of the vote of the House, I think that correctly states what is the Rule of the House. If the question is proposed and objection is raised, the House then has the right to determine whether it will take the Third Reading or not. I do not think that that question has been pressed against objection taken, except in cases where there has been something exceptional in the extent or character of the opposition. The decision of Mr. Speaker Peel seems to me to have carefully laid down what the Rule is; and I may point out that since then, as lately as June 2, 1892, when the Clergy Discipline Immorality Bill was before the House, and when there was no urgency, there was a debate on the Report stage, and several Amendments were moved and divisions taken by a minority limited in number. After the conclusion of the Report stage, the Third Reading of the Bill was asked for. The question was put, and there was a division, when the question was carried by 135 to 14 votes. And there are other precedents.

As regards the other point raised—namely, that the particular Resolution under which the House sat upon that Monday prevented the proceedings of which the right hon. Gentleman complained—I may point out that that rule did not prevent anything from being done which could in ordinary circumstances have been done under the Order for the Committee on the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] If there had been no such Resolution on that Order being called, and the Committee stage taken, and Report made without amendment, the Third Reading might have been moved and taken. There was, therefore, nothing in the Resolution which could prevent the House from disposing of all business which could under ordinary circumstances have been dealt with under that particular Order of the Day. For these reasons I think that the proceedings were in order.

WINE AND BEERHOUSE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred from this day till Wednesday 30th June.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) complained of the great difficulty in which the House was placed in proceeding to discuss an important Measure like this so early after the holidays—a difficulty which was well illustrated by the extraordinary return which had been circulated by the Education Department. The return purported to be a list of the necessitous schools throughout the country which were to be aided by the Bill. One would think that some common principle was applied to these schools, and that something like equal treatment was meted out to them. In working out the results shown in the return, he found that there were 28 School Boards which received the munificent sum of £1 each, and 186 School Boards which received between £1 and £10. The results in counties were still more extraordinary. In Bedfordshire the Bill would give 5s. per scholar, but in Buckinghamshire the amount was only 2s. 7¼d. In Cornwall the amount was 3s. 1d., in Devon 5s. 5d., in Dorset 1s. 11d. It was therefore evident that the principle of the Bill did not apply fairly. The anomalies were worse in the case of particular Boards in the same county. In Berkshire one School Board, with a rate of 9d., received 1s. 7d. per scholar, and another with a rate of 9½d., with practically the same number of children and conditions, received 3s. 6d. In Bedfordshire, for one School Board the grant would be 2s. 7d. per scholar, while another School Board in the same county received 5s. 5d., the rate being a penny more. The whole return was full of anomalies, and it illustrated how unequally the principle of the Bill worked. London, however, was treated worse than any part of the country. No grant of any kind was given to London. It was said that London had no necessitous schools, but the return showed how false was the statement. Just outside the borders of London some School Boards in Essex received the largest amount under the Bill, but in the East End of London, where there were just as many necessitous schools, nothing was given. Owing to the system of rating spread over London, the rich districts contributed to the necessitous schools, which were thereby supported. Why should not a similar principle be laid down with regard to Voluntary Schools? Under the Voluntary Schools Act, London received only £44,000, but her contribution under the Act would be at least £140,000. He thought hon. Members who represented London divisions ought to look into this matter. Out of 60 Members, there were 52 sitting on the opposite side of the House who supported the Government. They had London in the hollow of their hands, and the result was they were laying this iniquitous financial burden on London for the benefit of the rest of the country. There was another feature to which he wished to direct attention. They were laying on this large grant without any equivalent grant being made to Ireland. He said that the Irish Members ought to devote more attention than they seemed inclined to do. They voted for the grant to the Voluntary Schools without ever raising this principle, that Ireland had to contribute part of the money. Now there was a further grant of only £120,000, but Ireland would have to contribute its share. He thought such a grant should be watched with jealous care. The Bill, no doubt, was a short Bill, and it seemed to be in the larger part a quotation from the Bill of 1870. As his hon. Friend said, no doubt it was going to be ram-rodded through the House, but before it passed they ought to work more on the points to which he referred, and maintain the principle of equality of treatment which had been upheld to the present time.

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) proposed to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words

> "In the opinion of this House, no Bill making further provision for aiding School Boards will be satisfactory which does not at least provide a sum amounting in the aggregate to five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in average attendance at Board Schools in England and Wales."

He said this Bill was on a par with all the previous performances of this Ministry, who had been occupied since the last election in keeping up its record of broken promises. Their policy had been to sacrifice principles and pledges in paying their supporters out of the pockets of the taxpayer. Few things would discredit them more than the way they had thrown away a great opportunity in this matter of education. The Government had a great majority and enormous surpluses. But their policy in the two Bills of this Session amounted to this—that they were not trying to help education, but to promote the interests of one class of schools. They stuffed to repletion the treasury of the Voluntary Schools, while they starved the Board Schools to make them unpopular. ["Hear, hear!"] Either the whole of the cry about the suffering ratepayer, which had been the staple topic of the Tory candidates on every platform in the last two general elections, had been insincere and unreal, or else this Bill convicted the Tory Party of a flagrant breach of faith. The First Lord of the Treasury, in introducing the Voluntary Schools Bill, had said they had always been in favour of relieving the hard-pressed ratepayers. After looking at the Return he could not understand how the First Lord of the Treasury could look a Lancashire ratepayer in the face again. Why should the ratepayers who, in the exercise of their own judgment and civic rights had imposed on themselves rates for educational purposes, receive no consideration? The 53 Boards of Lancashire expended close upon £303,000 on their schools; but under this Bill—this generous Bill—only four Boards would receive £291, or 10d. a child, and most of this went to Barrow. [*Laughter.*] There were 13 other county boroughs in Lancashire spending £250,650, but under this Bill they would not get a farthing; but if Lancashire was treated on the principle of absolute equality it would get a sum of nearly £30,000. Why were the Lancashire ratepayers, who expended out of rates £303,000, and altogether about £800,000 on education, to get no help whatever? It was worse still as to London, which spent nearly three millions, and it was not to get a farthing of help. By right London ought to have £100,000 given to it. In the 64 great county boroughs, excluding London, the ratepayers contributed to educational purposes £1,225,000, or ten times as much as the voluntary subscribers contributed to their schools. Yet the great boroughs were to receive only about £45,000, and of this sum £30,000 would go to five towns. The Bill would not deal fairly with the great boroughs, which had imposed upon themselves many burdens in the interests of education. The help given in the county boroughs under this Measure would amount only to 10½d. per child. What ought to be done was to deal with both classes of schools on equal terms, and to grant for the relief of the ratepayers an aggregate sum calculated according to the whole number of the children in average attendance. That plan should be adopted, and then the 64 county boroughs would receive £153,000 without London, and London being added £256,000. In these boroughs the efforts of voluntary subscribers were represented by £210,000, and those efforts were to be met by a grant of £191,000 out of the Treasury. But the volume of the rates imposed upon these populations by their own authorities amounted to £2,700,000, and their efforts were only to be met by a miserable grant of £45,000. The ratepayers had made 13 times the amount of local effort made by the voluntary subscribers, and yet the grant which the former were to receive was only one-fourth of that awarded to the latter. The Government had dealt with this question in a light and airy fashion. They had not attempted to argue it out when the Bill was introduced, and no one had risen to justify the principle of the Bill that day, the Second Reading having been moved by a mere nod to the Chair. He held that the Bill was a scandal, having regard to the obvious duties of the Government towards elementary education. In no other country in the world would such a division be drawn between one class of schools and another: nowhere else would one class of schools be dealt with on the principle of rewarding them in inverse ratio to the amount of local efforts made to support them. This was a sham Bill; it did not proceed on the principle of recognising the poverty of districts. What it did was to award a very small amount of money to a very few districts which came within the operation of the Measure owing, as it were, to the accidents of assessment. He might be told that he ought not to find fault with the Bill, because his own county was rather favoured by it. But what was the real state of the case regarding Northamptonshire? The sum given would be only £1,549, and that would be given to School Boards which raised rates amounting to nearly £24,000. The subscriptions to Voluntary Schools amounted to £11,500, and the grant which they were to receive was £8,250. Thus the grant to the Voluntary Schools reached a percentage upon the subscriptions of 72, while the proportion of the Board Schools' grant to the rate would be only 8·6. That was to say, nine times more was to be given to the Voluntary Schools than to the Board Schools, and that would be the case in a county which was described as specially favoured. The whole policy of the Act of 1870 was based upon the principle of equality of treatment, and when the Debates of 1876 took place the same claim was put forward by the friends of national education, and up to the present time the principle of equality of treatment had been frankly and fully recognised, he might almost say, on both sides. He did not need to quote again the well-known reply of the Duke of Devonshire to the deputation that waited upon him on this question. The doctrine of the Tory Party on the subject of relieving the rates was peculiar. If a community agreed to rate itself for any other object than the education of its children, the ratepayers, according to the Party opposite, ought to be rewarded by the State, and grants flowed like water. But if the ratepayers determined to rate themselves for what was, perhaps, one of the highest objects of local self-government, namely, the education of the children in their district, they were apparently to be penalised, and to be substantially fined for the transgression. This Bill had already caused suspicion and dislike among large classes of those who were interested in this question. The right hon. Gentleman opposite must have read the discussions that took place the other day at the conference of the National Teachers at Swansea, when a Resolution demanding exactly what he now asked the House to sanction was passed with unanimity. The hon. Member for North West Ham had explained that he understood the Resolution as meaning that the Legislature ought to deal with all classes of schools on equal and fair lines, and ought to treat one class of local effort in the cause of education on the same principles as they applied to the other class. One set of schools were supported by contributions from the rates; the other set were supported by contributions from individuals and societies. Both sets ought to receive equal treatment, and the interests of the children ought to be kept in view as a vital principle. It was simply monstrous to talk of the bottomless purse of the ratepayers. The truth was that they soon got to the bottom of the generosity of the voluntary subscriber. Some hon. Members had expressed the opinion that the whole subject of the maintenance of elementary education should be transferred to the Exchequer. He wished most strongly to dissociate himself from any such view, for he did not think that the elementary education of this country could be carried on in a satisfactory way either in its educational aspect or in its economic aspect if they were to transfer to the Exchequer the local payments which were now made on a sense of local responsibility, which created a large amount of local interest and which naturally developed a great amount of local attention. Such a transfer would be a very grave mistake of policy. While he assented to the principle of the sliding scale, he regarded the present application as ludicrous. Under its application some 25 or 30 School Boards would receive the enormous sum of £1 each towards their expenditure. Would it not be farcical for the right hon. Gentleman to send that to a School Board, which, of course, that sum would not benefit in the least? He wanted to get rid of these small Boards altogether. Education ought to be organised in a broad spirit, and there ought to be large representative authorities in a county, which could be intrusted, not with miserable little sums, but with large and substantial amounts, so that excellence might be obtained, and the best educational equipment provided over a considerable area. This was a pettifogging Bill, and he wished, in moving his Amendment, to protest not only against the Bill as wholly inadequate and wholly defective in machinery, but also against the spirit which underlay this whole class of legislation—the spirit of pushing under one class of schools as much as possible, while treating the other class with as much consideration as was possible. That principle was wholly wrong and absolutely contrary to the common sense view taken by all great nations on the question of education. He demanded in his Amendment that this question should be adequately dealt with on the principle of fairness to all sides, and in a comprehensive spirit which would assign a large sum to the Education Department to distribute in all centres where aid was specially required. On these grounds he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name. [" Hear, hear! "]

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.), in seconding the Amendment, said that the question before the House was whether the proposal of the Government was fair to the Board Schools. In the preceding Bill a certain class of schools and a certain class of ratepayers received from the Government £620,000 a year, while under this Bill the Board Schools were to receive only £110,000. This was but a very small proportion to the total amount raised in rates throughout the country, which last year reached to more than £2,000,000. The relief given to the ratepayers under this Bill would amount to hardly 5 per cent. on the amount of the rates, whereas the relief given to Voluntary Schools would reach the large proportion of 75 per cent. of the amount contributed by voluntary subscribers. The average rate raised for Board Schools throughout the country at the present time was 9d. in the pound, and the meaning of the financial proposals of the Bill was that in future the ratepayers would have to subscribe towards their schools, not 9d. in the pound, but 8½d. The number of schools that would be affected by the Bill was comparatively small—out of 5,316 School Boards only 794 were dealt with by the Bill. Taking first the county boroughs, a large number of them would get nothing under the Bill. Birmingham, for instance, where 48,276 children were being educated in Board Schools as against 24,396 in denominational schools, would get nothing under the Bill, although the rate was a fairly high one. The case of Liverpool was the same, and Nottingham with 25,110 children being educated in Board Schools, and with a rate of 15d. in the pound, would not get a penny. Coming next to urban districts with a population of over 20,000, he found that in the County of Middlesex only one such district—namely Tottenham—would receive anything under the Bill, and in Kent and Lancashire not one. Darlington, where 3,543 children were being educated, and where the rate was 10d. in the pound; Acton, with 3,019 children and a rate of 10d.; and Hornsey, with 4,971 children and a rate of 11d., would all receive nothing. But there was another injustice or anomaly in the operation of the Bill. The rate in Workington was 9½d., and the School Board there would receive 5s. 7d. per child in average attendance, whereas in Stockton, with a rate of 9¾d., the School Board would get only 1s. per child. The main objections were taken on that side of the House to the Bill. First, that the grant was totally inadequate, and secondly, that in the distribution of the grant the Bill would work unfairly and unequally. The exceptional position of Wales deepened the injustice of the Bill. The dominating principle in the proposals of the Government was that there should be some connection between the rateable value of a district and the number of the children in the schools; but that principle would not be carried out when the Bill came into actual operation. The School Boards in Wales and Monmouthshire under the Bill would receive approximately £22,000. At present, under the Bill of 1870, they were entitled to the sum of £30,373, so that the real money benefit to Wales and Monmouthshire would be £15,000. The amount raised by the rates in Wales and Monmouthshire was about £114,000, so that the relief given would not amount to more than 15 per cent. of the amount raised. The 5s. grant under the Voluntary Schools Act for Wales and Monmouthshire reached in round figures £25,000. The subscriptions towards Voluntary Schools came to about £35,000. Therefore the relief given to these voluntary subscribers would be at the rate of 70 per cent. In Anglesey there were 31 School Boards, but eight only would be affected by the Bill. The ratepayers contributed to the School Boards £3,792, and they would receive £95 10s., from which sum about £25—which they were already entitled to under the Act of 1870—was to be deducted. In Carnarvonshire there were 60 School Boards, but 13 only would be affected. The ratepayers contributed £8,000, and they would receive £1,560. They were already entitled to £620, so that the nett relief would be £758 only. The case of Flintshire was still worse. There were there five School Boards, and only one would receive aid. The local School Board rates amounted to £4,560, but the ratepayers were only to receive the miserable pittance of £140. Under the Voluntary Schools Act, however, the denominational schools received £2,404 per annum. In Merionethshire there were 19 School Boards, but only eight got relief. The ratepayers contributed £9,369, and they would get £867. In Montgomeryshire there were 15 School Boards, but only two got any relief. The ratepayers contributed £2,864, and they got £29. In Denbighshire the case was almost as bad. There were 28 School Boards, but five only got any grant. The ratepayers raised every year for the schools £10,000, but they would get £500 only. The subscribers to denominational schools contributed over £3,038, but they got £2,076. Not only was the grant under the Bill totally inadequate, but the sliding scale would work very unfairly as between Board School and Board School. For instance, the heaviest rated School Board in Denbighshire, whose rate was 1s. 5½d. in the £, got the least under the Bill—namely, £43; while the School Board whose rate was the lightest—10¾d.—got the most, namely, £314. Summarising the case as regarded North Wales, there were in that district 158 School Boards, only 37 of which would receive any relief at all. The ratepayers contributed towards their Board Schools over £38,000, and they would receive under the Bill £2,360 only. They would thus be relieved to the extent of 7 per cent., while the Voluntary Schools had been relieved to the extent of over 70 per cent. Because he regarded the grant given by the Bill as totally inadequate for the purpose which the Government had in view, and because the sliding scale as now drawn would undoubtedly operate unfairly as between School Board and School Board, he had much pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) thought the House could hardly help feeling that the very important question raised by the Bill had been discussed by the two hon. Members who had just spoken in reference to minute details rather than general principles. His hon. Friend who moved the Amendment complained very much because Lancashire was not fairly dealt with by the Bill, and he thought the Leader of the House would have great difficulty in meeting his constituents, considering how very little relief would be given to Lancashire. But they all remembered that a little while ago, when the Voluntary Schools Bill was before the House, the accusation brought against the Government was that Lancashire received a great deal too much, and that the constituents of the Leader of the House were being bribed by the large amount received under that Bill. The line taken by the Opposition generally did not seem to be at all consistent with the principles which they had advocated when other Measures had been before the House. He understood that this Bill would not be opposed by hon. Gentlemen opposite. They did not, however, manifest any great gratitude for it. They seemed "willing to wound, yet afraid to strike." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton indeed said that he would welcome any proposal to grant money from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of rates. He was sorry to hear his right hon. Friend say so. That used to be the special view of the Tory Party. Sir Massey Lopes year after year brought forward Motions in that sense, and they were resisted by the great majority of the Liberals on the ground that such grants tended to weaken economy, and to encourage additional expenditure; that they took a guinea out of one pocket to put a sovereign into the other. The experience of recent years went far to confirm the truth of that opinion. They had heard much about the "bottomless purse" of the ratepayers, and it was certainly no use pouring money into a "bottomless purse." Our taxation had increased, and our rates had risen also. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had more than once pointed out, and with great force, the inconsistency of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who denounced the Agricultural Rating Bill of last year, because they said that any relief of rates on land went into the pockets of the landlords, and now complained of this Bill because it did not do enough to relieve the ratepayers in large towns. If the Government brought in a Bill to relieve the rates, right hon. Gentlemen condemned it as a Bill in relief of landlords, on the ground that rates fell on the landlords. If a Bill were brought in to help necessitous schools, they were told that rates fell on occupiers, and that the Government were doing nothing, or very little, to assist the overburdened ratepayers. As he understood, this apparent contradiction was justified by the allegation that the incidence of rates in town and country was quite different; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton had told them that the First Lord of the Admiralty in his standard work on local taxation had clearly pointed out the difference between the incidence of rate on different classes of property. The right hon. Gentleman had kindly referred him to the passages on which he relied, but they scarcely seemed to him to bear out the interpretation put on them. No doubt the subject was very complex and there were many differences, but as regarded land, he understood the contention of the First Lord of the Admiralty to have been that most land was held on yearly tenancies, and somewhat below its value, so that in agricultural districts the tendency had been "to throw by far the greater part of the rates upon the tenants." On the other hand, when there were leases, he said that

> "both in the case of land and houses, where a fresh agreement is to be made with the owner of the soil, the whole of the existing rates comes out of the pocket of the landlord in the shape of a diminished rent; neither the farmer nor the builder knowingly or willingly intends any portion to come out of his own pocket; if it does, it is because he has miscalculated the future."

Passing to the case of towns, did he say that rates were ultimately paid by the occupiers? Not at all. When ground-rents were high he said, "It is almost certain that rates affect the ground landlord alone," and he added:—

> "To sum up the case of house property generally, it appears that the owners of building land, like the owners of other land, have to submit to a reduction of rent equivalent to the average amount of rates which the builder or other lessee calculates that he would have to pay according to the average of past rates."

He could not think, therefore, that the First Lord of the Admiralty would agree to the interpretation placed upon his words by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. However that might be, he must say that in the long run, and speaking in the great majority of cases, he believed that the rates in towns as well as in the country districts fell ultimately upon the owner of the land. Of course, where land was let below its real value, either in towns or country, that did not apply; but in towns that was not often the case. He confessed, therefore, under these circumstances that he had some difficulty in understanding the application which was now made of the term "necessitous School Boards." Hon. Gentlemen opposite complained that by the recent legislation of the Government the towns were placed in an unfair position. Wolverhampton, for instance, and West Ham had been specially referred to. But let the House take the case of two men who invested money, the one in land and the other in Wolverhampton or one of our great cities. In the first case the value of the investment as a rule had considerably fallen, in the other it had largely risen; and yet they were told that they ought to impose taxation which fell upon all classes of the community in order to help those whose property had most risen. Take, again, the case of West Ham. Suppose two men who invested money, one in land down in Essex, the other in West Ham. He admitted that rates were very high in West Ham, and should not grudge some present assistance. It was quite true that the rates in West Ham were very high; but whereas the investment of the man who purchased land in West Ham had greatly increased in value, on the other hand the unfortunate purchaser of land down in Essex found that much of his property was now derelict and almost valueless; and yet they were told that they should tax them in order to help their much more fortunate neighbours. Of course, in making these remarks he was speaking of a permanent contribution. It was undeniable that in West Ham the rates had largely risen of late years, and for some temporary assistance therefore there was no doubt very much to be said. He believed that in London there would be a feeling that they had some cause to complain of the manner in which they had been recently treated, not especially by the present Government, but by those also who had preceded them. It might be quite true that London was, as a whole, a rich place, but there were very poor districts in London; and London would, he thought, consider that it had some reason to complain that they should receive so little benefit from the Voluntary Schools Bill and none at all from the present Measure. He admitted, however, the difficulty in the case of London, and a Committee was sitting on the whole question. He trusted that the result would be to do justice to London, but so far as the present Bill was concerned he regarded this Bill as an honest proposal on the part of the Government to carry out their pledge as regarded Board Schools.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I do not propose to follow my right hon. Friend into the very dry subject of the incidence of rating. I have too often bored the House upon that question to bore it again to-night. I can only say that I trust he will take occasion to repeat his views when the First Lord of the Admiralty is here, and I shall rejoice in the duel between two such authorities on this question about which we are all so much perplexed. I am glad to think that in my right hon. Friend's opinion London has a case, and if he can persuade the Government to amend the Bill to meet the case of London he will have from this side all the support he desires. I desire to say a word or two upon the source and origin of this Bill, and shall endeavour to submit to the House that the present modification of the 3d. rate and the present modification of 7s. 6d. is not at all in harmony with the Act of 1870, does not carry out its spirit, and instead of meeting the state of facts with which that Act was intended to grapple, it aggravates the situation all round and makes it much worse. When Mr. Forster introduced his Bill in 1870 he called attention to the question of the burden which would be cast upon the ratepayer, and the figures he proceeded upon were these. He put the cost of education at that time at £1 7s. 6d. per head, of which the Government grant represented 9s. 7d., the subscriptions 7s. 3d., and the parents' fees were something between 8s. and 9s. Mr. Forster had to ask the House of Commons to consider what the probable future cost of education would be, and he then told the House that, in his judgment, the rate would not exceed 3d. in the pound. Mr. Forster never departed from that estimate. His intention was that 3d. should be the maximum, and that if there was anything beyond 3d. then that the State—that is, the Consolidated Fund—should be called in aid of the local rate, and that no further burden should be imposed on the ratepayer. Clause 84, as it originally stood in the Bill of 1870, showed that Mr. Forster's opinion then was that the extreme cost which ought to fall upon the local authority should not be more than 10s. per child, and that if that figure were exceeded the State should make up the difference. That Bill was not, like the Education Bill of this Session, run rapidly through the House. [*Cheers.*] The country was allowed a long interval for its consideration between its Second Reading and its Committee stage. The Bill was introduced in February, and in June, when it came on again there was a crisis, for, as those who have read the life of Mr. Forster will know, the Cabinet was not quite united as to the best course to be pursued. In June, Mr. Gladstone, who was then First Lord of the Treasury, proposed that, having regard to the burdens thrown both upon the local authorities and the voluntary subscribers, the State grant should be increased to 50 per cent. of the whole cost of education—the additional grant to be given to both rated and Voluntary Schools alike—and in proposing that change Mr. Gladstone said that the relief it would give to the rates would be so considerable that the School Board rate would never come to 3d. in the pound. Again, when in Committee on the Bill, an Amendment was moved that the School Board rate should not exceed one penny in the pound, and that all the rest of the cost of education should be paid out of the Imperial funds, Mr. Forster declared it was not probable that any charge for the purposes of the Bill would exceed a rate of 3d. in the pound. Accordingly 7s. 6d. per child was substituted for 10s. per child in Clause 84 of the Bill. All this showed that the whole Clause was based upon the principle that the School Board rate was not to exceed 3d. in the pound. The Government now propose to alter this scheme. They still adhere to the 3d. in the pound, and they still adhere to the 7s. 6d. in the way of making them the basis of their calculation, but they do not accept the 7s. 6d. per child as the limit of local taxation beyond which the cost of education should be paid by the State. Mr. Forster said in 1870 that 30s. per year—made up of local rates, school fees, and Government grants—was too high a figure at which to place the cost of educating each child. He then expressed the belief that the real cost was 25s. 7d. Well, the cost has about doubled since then. In Voluntary Schools it is £2, and in Board Schools £2 10s. per child per annum. The Government grant, which was then something over 9s., is now double. Therefore the Government grant has increased in proportion to the cost. The cost of education since 1870 has doubled; the Government grant has doubled; but the local burden has remained stationary. The Government have declared that, so far as the Voluntary Schools were concerned, they are entitled to an additional grant, and under the Act of this Session they have increased that grant by 5s. I am not going to discuss that Act at all. I am dealing with this Bill as carrying out the avowed policy of 1870, upon which that Act was based, that there should be a limit fixed, having regard to the cost of education, beyond which the tax upon the local ratepayer should not be increased. Mr. Forster said more than once, "We cannot go into the question of the incidence of taxation." The defect of rates then was that they did not fall fairly on all classes of property. The complaint of that day is the complaint which is made to-day. An inquiry was promised into the question of the incidence of taxation 25 years ago, but it has not been carried out, and I am very sceptical whether it will be carried out. We ought to legislate on the basis that rates as levied now are not levied fairly on all classes of the community, and it is within your right to increase the burden of those rates beyond a certain figure if for a certain purpose the State requires the locality to discharge certain duties. But the principle of the Act of 1870 was that the State was to give aid by a very considerable contribution after a certain amount of that figure had been contributed. What is the rate to-day? I am quite willing to say that regard should be had to the increased cost of education, the increased grant, and the different circumstances; what was right to fix as a rate limit in 1870 would not be right to fix in 1897. Suppose you doubled the rate, and said that 6d. should be the rate instead of 3d., it would be a true proportion according to the present cost of education. My hon. Friend told you that in the case of 1,500 of the principal School Boards of England the rate exceeds 6d. in the pound. The Government admit the grievance, and they propose to meet it by this Bill. But whatever I may say in support of the Amendment of my hon. Friend behind me as to the injustice which we have already discussed as between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, I think the injustice inside this Bill is far greater than even the initial injustice as between the two classes of schools. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not impute for a moment to the right hon. Gentleman opposite or the Government any intention to commit an injustice; but they have adopted a scheme and a sliding scale which are inevitably bound to work unjustly, and which I will defy them to adapt to any principle that can work satisfactorily or fairly. I must trouble the House with a few figures on this question. I will deal with what the School Boards inside this Bill are going to get, and show the gross and unparalleled injustice of this scheme. I see my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin opposite, so I will take a few of the School Boards in Cornwall which are going to be relieved under this Bill, and having shown the differences between them, I will ask the Government to state on what principle they defend them. In St. Agnes the school rate is 7d. in the pound, and it is to get 4s. 10d. for every child in the Board School. St. Austell pays a rate of 10¾d., and it is to get only 2s. 2d. St. Endellion pays a rate of 10¼d., and is to get 4s. 4d. St. Just in Penwith pays a rate of 14d., and is to get 7s. 7d.; while St. Just in Roseland, with a rate of 21d., is to get 7s. 6d. St. Teath pays a rate of 14d., and is to get only 3s. 11d. I will leave the right hon. Member for Bodmin to explain to his constituents the financial justice and equity of this scheme. In the County of Derby, the borough of Chesterfield pays a rate of 1s., and is to get 3s. 1d.; Hartington, with a rate of 1s. 2¼d., is to get only 2s. 11d.; Ilkeston pays a rate of 10d., and is to get 4s.; Osmaston pays a rate of 1s. 4d., and is to get 6s. 8d.; Pinxton pays a rate of 1s. 1d., and is to get 6s. 9d. In the county of Devon, Bideford pays a rate of 11d., and is to get 4s. 1d.; Buckfastleigh pays a rate of 11¼d., and is to get 4s. 2d.; the borough of Devonport pays a rate of 1s., and is to get only 4d.; while Kingswear, which also pays a rate of 1s., gets 5s. 10d. In the county of Durham, Crook pays a rate of 1s., and is to get 5s. 7d.; the borough of Gateshead pays a rate of 10d., and is to get 3s. 8d.; whereas the borough of West Hartlepool pays a rate of 1s. 0¼d., and is to get 3s. 4d. The anomalies are astounding in Essex, in Gloucester, and in Kent. In the latter county, Dartford pays a rate of 1s. 3¼d., and is to get only 7d.; while Burham, which only pays a rate of 8d., is to get 3s. 10d. In the county of Lancaster, the borough of Barrow-in-Furness pays a rate of 1s. 0¼d., and is to get 7d.; while Shevington, with a rate of 10d., is to get 5s. 4d. In the county of Leicester, the borough of Loughborough pays a rate of 10¼d., and is to get only 1s. 3d. In Lincoln, the borough of Grimsby, with a rate of 9¼d., is to get only 4d. I might take many other counties, but I will take my own county of Staffordshire, where the differences are really amusing, as well as startling. In Willenhall the rate is 11d., and they are to get 4s. 1d. I am very pleased that my constituents there will receive that sum. That is a purely manufacturing neighbourhood. But there is another place in the county, Burslem, which is of precisely the same character, and where precisely the same conditions obtain, and which, although the rate is the same, 11d., is to get only 2s. 4d. I should like to hear why this anomaly should exist. Rushall, with a rate of 10d., is to get 6s. There are two Nortons in Staffordshire, each with a rate of 1s., but one is to get 4s. 1d. and the other 3s. 4d. In Warwickshire, Aston, which is really a part of Birmingham, is to get 2s. 6d. per head, while Birmingham gets nothing. In Worcestershire there are some astounding discrepancies. Kidderminster, with a rate of 1s. 1d., is to get only 1d., while Dudley, with a rate of 8¼d., is to get 8d. Wollscote, again, with a rate of 4¾d., is to get 5s. 3d. The county of York bristles with these inequalities, and they are to be found all through the Bill. I ventured to call the other Bill discriminating injustice; I call this Bill indiscriminating injustice. I put it to the House that it is impossible to defend this scheme upon the principle of Mr. Forster's Act of 1870, and it is impossible to defend the extraordinary operation of this sliding scale. The startling contrasts which I have given are inherent in an attempt to apportion this relief according to the rate raised in various localities, because the diversity of the rating areas prevents it. Our rating areas are as great a chaos as are our rates. There are circumstances involving the amount of rate raised, such as the poverty or wealth of the locality, or the character of its occupants. If you had even taken the whole county, you might have had less injustice in this Bill. The only method by which you can ever arrive at a settlement of this question is by treating the schools, whether Voluntary or School Board, equally all round —[*cheers*]—as all previous legislation with reference to public grants has done. You cannot adjust the matter by the rates; you cannot institute an inquisitorial inquiry as to what locality is rich or poor, or what school ought or ought not to be benefited. Your principle should be to treat all alike, and to give to every one the same. I think a very inadequate amount is given to School Boards. In a year when the Exchequer is overflowing, as, perhaps, it has never overflowed before, I think it would have been worthy of the House of Commons and of the Government to have treated Board Schools with a generous liberality, and not to see how far they could screw them down. I think the sum given ought not to have been less than that given to the Voluntary Schools, and if the Government had chosen to give both classes of schools more, perhaps, it would have been wiser, and such action would have been more likely to obtain a final settlement than anything we have had yet. If you give one Board School 5s., give it to another. Your own limit is wrong as to what is a necessitous school within that limit. Distribute equally within that limit, and I think you should distribute outside that limit. Take a new limit, and instead of 3d. some other figure, and treat all schools exactly alike, totally irrespective of the richness or poverty of the district in which the school may be situated. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.), replying to the speech of the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton, said an argument sought to be based on the prediction of 1870, that 3d. in the pound would suffice for the education rate throughout the country, carried almost its own refutation. The right hon. Gentleman said he wanted equality of treatment. But surely it was not treating Board and Voluntary Schools equally that the latter should have £618,000 under the Voluntary Schools Bill of the present year, and that the Imperial Exchequer should be used in aid of Board Schools where the rate was in excess of 6d. in the pound. What the advocates of Voluntary Schools wanted, and what they had never had and were not getting under this Bill, was equal treatment all round. Any system such as the right hon. Gentleman suggested—that the Imperial Exchequer should be drawn upon to aid all School Boards where the rate was in excess of 6d. in the pound—would not only perpetuate, but aggravate the existing inequalities. Hon. Members opposite challenged London Members to defend the Bill in the face of the scandal and grave injustice, as they called it, to which London was subjected under the Bill. The hon. Member for West Islington showed some sense of conscience. He had been so strenuous in his efforts to divert to England and London a great portion of the expenditure which should properly be defrayed by Ireland that he offered them a litle sop in aid where they were entitled to no relief whatever.

Mr. LOUGH asked if the hon. Member could mention any instance of any such sum being diverted to England that should have been paid by Ireland.

Mr. COHEN replied that, if it were relevant, he could go into the figures; but he understood that during the Debate on the financial relations between England and Ireland the hon. Member said two-and-a-half millions now being paid by Ireland should be paid by England.

Mr. LOUGH: The Royal Commission on the Financial Relations said so, not me. How ridiculous!

Mr. COHEN, resuming, said it was urged by hon. Members opposite that the Government were dealing with this great educational question piecemeal, and that this Bill was not final. A more unreasonable and inconsistent charge could not be made. It was truly said that the Bill of last year attempted too much. The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken said it would revolutionise our system of elementary education; others said that system would be undermined. This year we had two Bills, joint Bills, not so ambitious as the one Bill of last year, and the Government were reproached for dealing with the question piecemeal. The reproach was due to misapprehension of the purpose of the Bill now under discussion. It did not vary the system on which elementary education was conducted either in Board or Voluntary Schools, but simply gave aid to necessitous School Board Schools which, because of their need, were in a condition of inefficiency and perhaps decay, or in peril of falling out of existence altogether. He did not think any of the anomalies repeatedly referred to by hon. Members opposite were relevant to this Bill, because they did not touch the principle on which the Bill was framed. Hon. Gentlemen seemed to forget that the needs and necessities of Board Schools in certain places did not depend exclusively or even mainly upon the School Board rate which happened to be levied in those places, but on the amount which would be realised by the raising of 1d. in the pound. That was the principle on which the Bill was framed, and which guided its awards and appropriations. Even that must and did work some injustice in certain cases, but the principle was as nearly perfect as any principle of the kind could be. No one had been louder in his praise of aiding necessitous Board Schools than the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, who now advocated equal treatment all round.

Sir H. FOWLER said that what he said was that it was impossible in dealing with expenditure like school grants to exactly ascertain the respective needs of each locality, and that the only workable principle was to give to each school an equal sum according to the needs of the children in attendance.

Mr. COHEN remarked that he did not know whether that was possible, but the Bill made an attempt (to a great extent successful) to reduce inequalities and aid districts which, by the amount that 1d. in the pound would produce, proved to be necessitous. He agreed that London was hardly treated by getting no grant under the Bill, but as a London Member he could not seek redress for one injustice by inflicting another on another part of the country. He admitted that the Agricultural Rates Bill of last year, instead of diminishing an injustice, accentuated it. [*Opposition cheers.*] But he supported the Bill, believing it was a necessary and just measure. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Shoreditch was a member of that Commission before whom the London Members would argue the case and establish the injustice. But he would not, because they suffered an injustice in London, on that account support a claim for London for which not a shred of foundation could be established. If London had a claim, the method which hon. Gentlemen opposite would resort to would give them little or no benefit. If they were to give the whole of the £110,000 to the metropolis it would make practically no difference to the School Board rate. The only way to reduce the School Board rate of London was to reduce the School Board expenditure. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not say that the expenditure was excessive, nor did he ask that it should be diminished, but he did say that it was oppressive. Even if they were to give £20,000 or £30,000 out of this grant to London instead of going in relief of the rates, it would be applied to increase the expenditure—perhaps the necessary expenditure—and to cause education which was intended to be primary to become still more secondary. It was intended by the Act of 1870 and by the subsequent Free Education Act that the education given in Board Schools should be primary and not secondary, and the way to reduce the School Board rate of London was to divide more sharply and rigidly than was now the case the line which separated primary and secondary education. He did not complain of the education that was given in the Board Schools, and was not prepared to assert that it was extravagantly administered; but contended that if they were to give an education so much in advance of that which was intended by the Act of 1870 and the Free Education Act, then it was scarcely straightforward of hon. Members opposite to complain of the cost which that education necessarily involved. ["Hear, hear!"] He supported the Bill because he believed it was framed on a right principle. It recognised the necessities of their School Boards, and gave them relief in proportion to their needs. He was convinced that the grant proposed by the Bill was equitable and proportionate. It could not be equitable unless it was proportionate. The object of this Bill and the Voluntary Schools Act was to give aid on an equitable and a proportionate principle to those schools which were in want of pecuniary support. To help those which were not in need would be to perpetuate and not to remove the inequalities that admittedly now existed. He believed this Bill would materially contribute to, if it did not entirely accomplish that object; and, at any rate, it was a faithful fulfilment of the pledge given by the Government, and by all their supporters, before the last General Election. He thanked the Government for having brought in the Bill, which he hoped would be speedily passed into law.

Mr. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) remarked that until the speech which had just been delivered, he regarded this Bill as one of the most difficult subjects to thoroughly understand. That notion, however, had beeen put altogether on one side by the extraordinary speech of the hon. Member for Islington, who had declared that the way to lessen the educational burdens upon the ratepayers of London was to cut down the rates. The hon. Member said he was against lowering the educational standard of the metropolis, and then he went on to explain, by some curious process with which he did not seem to be quite satisfied himself, why he was supporting a Bill which gave no relief to his own constituents—a portion of the metropolis—the metropolis itself having a claim equal, to say the least of it, to any other educational authority in the United Kingdom. The hon. Member would find it much easier to make his explanation to that House than he would find it to meet his constituents in this matter. London ratepayers would want to know from their Members why it was they supported a Measure for the relief of Board Schools which did not give a single penny to the poor Board Schools of the metropolis. This Bill was intended as a sop. The Government obtained the support of many of the borough Members to the Church Schools Bill by the pledge that they would do something for the School Boards, but while they had given over £600,000 to the Voluntary, which were mainly Church of England, Schools, they only proposed to give £110,000 to the struggling Board Schools, and that in the most irregular manner imaginable. For instance, the School Board to which he was a ratepayer did not get a farthing, although, owing to the very high assessment of the parish, the rates were exceedingly heavy. It had been shown by speaker after speaker that the machinery of the Bill produced great injustice in various parts of the country, and he hoped the Vice President would insist upon a larger and better scheme. He supported the Amendment—which he hoped would be pressed to a Division—because it said that equality should be dealt out to both classes of schools, and that the Board School was as much entitled to 5s. per head all round as was the Voluntary School. He was bound to acknowledge that although the assistance given by the Bill was given in an inefficient, partial, irregular, and haphazard manner, his constituency would receive over £3,000 in the first year. But there was to be a process of reduction each year, and it seemed to him that by the extraordinary machinery provided it was possible for them to reach the vanishing point. If the Government, with their overflowing coffers and their enormous revenue, unexampled in the history of their country, had had the moral courage to devote a portion of the great surplus they would have to dealing out equal treatment to all classes of schools, their action would have been met with a universal shout of approval, and they would have received probably as united a support from the Opposition as from their own followers. Money was lavishly thrown away on naval and military matters, but when they came to the question of a sound education for every child in the land—one of the most important factors in their competition with foreign countries—they became parsimonious and mean. Educated Germans were their great competitors in London to-day, and yet they had a milk and water suggestion from the Member for East Islington that the educational standard of London should be lowered. He was surprised to hear the noble Lord the Member for Rochester cheer a backward policy of that kind.

Viscount CRANBORNE (Rochester): I cheered a proposal to lower the expenditure, not the standard of education.

Mr. BROADHURST said he should like the noble Lord to explain how the cost of education was to be lowered without lowering the standard of education. He wanted to know how the Government were going to defend their treatment of School Boards as compared with their treatment of Voluntary Schools. Of course, if they adopted the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton and provided £500,000 out of the Budget, so as to make the relief of the two classes of schools equal, they would remove the greatest cause of complaint against the present Measure; and if the Government made sure that all Boards got a fair share of the grant they would do much to facilitate its passage through the House.

Mr. C. A. CRIPPS (Gloucestershire, Stroud) thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton was somewhat inaccurate in his analysis of the provisions of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the Bill proposed an alteration in the 3d. and in the sum of 7s. 6d. The only change made had reference, not to the 3d., but to the 7s. 6d. Under the Bill a sliding scale was provided by which that sum of 7s. 6d. might be altered according to the amount in the pound which was paid in various districts towards School Board expenses.

When the right hon. Gentleman realised that he would see that what the Government were now proposing was not an alteration of the policy laid down by Mr. Forster in 1870, but a carrying out of that policy in connection with new conditions so as to bring about somewhat the same results that were brought about by the very proposal which Mr. Forster himself introduced. The statistics prepared by the Education Department showed that the nominal produce of the 3d. rate per School Board scholar in average attendance varied according to the conditions of different localities. Therefore School Board districts under the scheme of Mr. Forster would have derived in some cases, although they were heavily taxed, no advantage at all; and in other cases a varying scale of advantage entirely dependent on the particular conditions of the particular locality to which that section might be applied. The basis of the Government scheme was exactly the same, although it was applied in a somewhat more artistic manner, and although the amount which might be given in School Board districts was proportionately, to a certain extent, increased. If the right hon. Gentleman opposite approved of the principle adopted by Mr. Forster in 1870 he would find merely an extension and improvement of the same principle in the provisions of the present Bill. It might be perfectly true that where they had a sliding scale of this kind they would have conditions of hardship, but the principle was right. It was not the actual rate paid, but it was the rate paid in reference to the burden which that rate threw on the ratepayers. That was the principle and basis on which the Government proposal was fixed. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1870 Mr. Forster put it forward as the first part of his argument that he desired to cover the country with good schools. The Government, in the Voluntary Schools Act and in the present Bill, were merely seeking to carry out what Mr. Forster put forward as the first plank in his educational programme. The difficulty had arisen because the standard of efficiency was very much higher now than it was in 1870, and, therefore, if they were to apply to the present standard of education the same principle as Mr. Forster applied in 1870, they must do it by giving a larger amount from Imperial resources. They could not do it in any other way. He did not think it would be possible to actually limit the amount of the School Board rate in the manner the right hon. Gentleman opposite had suggested, but he understood the right hon. Gentleman to agree with the general principle that the greater part of the funds for educational purposes should be supplied from the national Exchequer. The Government by this Bill were recognising the change of circumstances since Mr. Forster's time, and were leaving the burden for education as nearly as possible where Mr. Forster designed that it should be placed. If that was so the whole argument of the right hon. Gentleman opposite was in favour not only of the main part of the proposal, that the assistance should come from the National Exchequer, but also of the manner in which it was to be distributed—by the amendment of Section 97 of Mr. Forster's Act. They had heard a great deal about the principle of statutory equality. But up to this Session there had, in consequence of the operation of Section 97 of the Act of 1870, been statutory inequality in favour of poor School Board districts, and the Government by their legislation were seeking to secure equal treatment for both classes of schools. With regard to the incidence of rates, he maintained that they could not lay down any general principle in order to show whether the occupier who paid the rates in the first instance was the person who would get the benefit of any relief. In the long run the relief might go to the landlord. But that was not the question; in the first instance it would go to the occupier. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton had spoken of the inequality of the proposals of the Government as between Voluntary School districts and School Board districts. He submitted that the same principle which was typified in the word "necessitous" had been applied by the Government equally in both cases. Necessity meant either that an intolerable strain was put on those who had to provide the funds for education, or that the financial conditions were such that the education given was inefficient. The Government proposed to give relief from the National Exchequer in order that neither of these alternatives should come about, and they applied the same principle whether in the case of Voluntary School districts or of School Board districts. In this case, as in the case of the Voluntary Schools Bill, the policy of the Opposition was one of negation. If education was to be made efficient, and the overburdened ratepayers relieved in the poor School districts, the necessary funds could only come from one source, the National Exchequer. It was so that money given in this way was likely to be wasted. He had never heard one iota of evidence adduced in support of that view and believed it to be a mere chimera. Anyone who had studied the question must come to the conclusion that the system of subvention, which would have to be carried much further so far as education was concerned, had never led to extravagance, and that the increased local expenditure was due to the growth of the necessities of the districts. It was difficult to say how the Bill would operate in all cases; but, taking the two counties with which he was best acquainted, he found that both in Gloucestershire and in Buckinghamshire the relief would go where it was most needed. He was one of those who would like still more to have been done under a Bill of this kind in the way of relieving the ratepayer from the heavy burden of elementary education. But by their two Measures the Government had found nearly three-quarters of a million per annum in order to assist primary national education. That was a great boon from the proper source, a far greater boon than had ever been proposed by any Member on the opposite side of the House. The objection urged to the method in which the proposed relief was to be given was the current argument of the Opposition against Bills brought forward by the Government. But if they looked at the question from the wider point of view and agreed with the premise of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that relief should be given and that it could only come from the National Exchequer, he doubted whether any more equitable system could be found than that embodied in this Bill and in the Act dealing with Voluntary Schools. He hoped that most of the funds provided would be used for one purpose and one purpose only—for promoting and extending the efficiency of the national education of this country. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said that it would have been convenient for the House if the Minister of Education, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, had supplied information which was altogether wanting on its introduction. He had been plied with questions; he had been called upon to remove the ambiguities of the 97th Clause of the Act of 1870; and the Returns which had been produced by the Education Department had disclosed the fantastic and absurd inequalities which would result from the operation of the Bill. It could not be supposed that they were intended or anticipated by the Government; which might be credited with honesty of intention; but which had, he thought, sadly blundered. Did they mean to remove these anomalies, and to allow Amendments to be adopted, or was the Bill to be forced through the House as its predecessor had been? ["Hear, hear!"] It had been repeatedly said that the two Bills were financial, and not educational, Measures; but they were not even good financial Measures; for they would create the grossest inequalities and cause the utmost discontent in numerous localities. The two Bills would do little or nothing for the improvement of education; but would produce a new crop of educational anomalies and evils. What were the future prospects of education under the present Government? They might, perhaps, pass a Teachers' Pension Bill, and deal with Secondary Education, but as regarded elementary education, he suspected that the constructive power of the Government was now exhausted. This was certain, that nothing had been, or was likely to be, done by the Government to redress the grievances of Nonconformists in the 8,000 parishes in which there was only a Church of England school. The grievance had been frankly admitted by the Government; but they were no forwarder in the absence of measures of redress. He hoped that the Government's treatment of the subject of education would have the effect of bracing up not Free Churchmen only, but all real friends of educational progress, to enter at once on an agitation which would not cease until there existed an educational system which would be national in fact as well as in name.

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University): The House will probably expect me, before the Bill is Read a Second time, to make a few observations in regard to the criticisms from the opposite side of the House. Now, the hon. Member for Northampton, in moving the rejection of the Bill, has used over again the old arguments that there ought to have been similarity of treatment accorded to the Board and the Voluntary Schools. I hope he will not think me discourteous if I do not follow him again into these arguments. The Bill which has now become law is a Bill based avowedly on the principle of redressing the inequalities which exist between Board Schools in regard to their command of public funds by giving a larger share of the grant out of the Exchequer to the Voluntary and to the Board Schools. The question was very well argued on both sides—I took no part in the discussion and can speak the more impartially—[*a laugh*]—and the House, by an overwhelming majority, adopted the policy of the Government, and resolved that that principle should be carried out in legislation; and, therefore, I hope the hon. Member for Northampton will forgive me for treating it as *res adjudicata*. But the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton criticised the Bill in an entirely different spirit. He criticised it as a bad Bill on its own merits, and he gave us a very interesting and very accurate account of the intentions of the authors of the Act of 1870 in passing that clause which this Bill is intended to amend. He carried his description of the history of the clause up to a certain point, up to its embodiment in the Act of 1870, but he did not tell the House or impress upon the House what I think ought to be remembered—that the intentions with which the authors passed that section and the expectations they entertained of the operation of it were in every particular falsified. The section amounted to an engagement on the part of the Imperial Government that they would see the local authorities through at the cost of a rate of threepence in the pound. But the result of an experience of 25 years has shown not only that that could not be done, but that it was an impossible scheme. I do not wish to throw any blame on such persons as Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster, but we have the advantage now of 25 years' experience. They were talking of things which they expected and hoped for, but we have the advantage of knowing what has actually occurred, and the expectations they formed were in every respect falsified. So far from the threepenny rate seeing the local authorities through, the rate has gone up in some places to an enormous amount, and in most places far above threepence. The average rate throughout the country is ninepence, and, so far from the cost of education thrown on the local authorities being 7s. 6d. per child, it has gone up on an average of 20s. per child. So far, moreover, from the cost being uniform, it varies enormously in different parts of the country, and there is no kind of uniformity attending it. What the Government had to deal with in the Bill which they proposed was not the expectations of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster, but the actual working of the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 in the country. A great many of the injustices which the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton detailed are not the creation of this Bill amending that statute, but the creation of the statute itself. ["Hear, hear!"] Let me take one example—that of Aston and Birmingham. It is said:—"What a monstrous thing it is that under this Bill Birmingham will get nothing and Aston will get 2s. 6d. per child." But Aston is already getting under the existing law a sum of 1s. 10d. per child, so that a greater part of the injustice which so excited the reprobation of the right hon. Gentleman is in existence already. [*Cheers.*] The Bill merely increases the subsidy which Aston receives. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell me that the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 should be amended in accordance with the intentions with which the authors of the Act of 1870 passed that section? I think that a very little consideration would show the House that such an amendment as that is impossible. What would you have to do? You would have to substitute 9d. for 3d. and 21s. for 7s. 6d. Would the right hon. Gentleman recommend that the House should now enact that where a rate of 9d. in the pound did not produce a sum of 21s. per child the difference should be met out of the Exchequer? Such a proposal as that is practically impossible. In the first place an enormous number of School Boards which are now receiving assistance from the Consolidated Fund would have this assistance cut off. Aston, for example, is receiving assistance from the Consolidated Fund; would any one propose to cut off from the local authorities who are receiving that amount of aid the aid which they are receiving? There would be such an amount of opposition as would make the passage of such a Bill impossible. But that is not the only difficulty. The authors of the Act of 1870 did not seem to realise the great variety of the cost of education in different places. I do not know any practical scheme by which you could give the kind of relief they wish to give to local authorities, because, whereas in some places the 9d. rate is not more than sufficient to provide the necessary standard of education, there are other places in which the amount of 21s. is gross extravagance, and where no such amount as a 9d. rate would be rendered necessary. Therefore, on reflection, even the right hon. Gentleman will admit that, if the Government had attempted, not to amend the Act of 1870 as in operation, but to pass an entirely new section and to carry out the mistaken intentions which the authors of the Act of 1870 contemplated, they would have been embarking on a perfectly impossible course, and would have been quite unable to carry such a scheme. What the Government attempted to do was a very much more modest and simple proposal. They did not intend by this Bill to reverse the earlier Act of the Session, or to attempt to carry out the intentions of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster in 1870. All they have attempted to do, and all they profess they are doing, is to make the operation of the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 more just, more equitable, and to give better assistance to the School Boards which are in considerable danger. I must say that the examples which have been brought forward as to the operation of this sliding scale have really, if the whole of the facts of the case are known, proved the equity with which it would work. The first thing stated is that London is cut out of the Bill. Nothing of the kind is the fact. London is not in the 97th Section of the Act of 1870 now, because the rate of 3d. in the pound in London produces between 21s. and 22s. instead of 7s. 6d. I cannot conceive any extension of the Act of 1870 which would bring London under its operation, where the rateable value is so high compared with the number of children to be educated. London, therefore, is not cut out of the Bill; the Act has not been so amended as to bring London within it; and I do not think it could be amended to have this result. The hon. Member for West Islington contrasted the treatment of London with the treatment of West Ham and Tottenham and other poor districts in the neighbourhood. It is true that West Ham gets a large sum, and it is true that Tottenham gets a considerable sum under the education rate if this Bill becomes law in its present form, but the ratepayers of Tottenham and West Ham will pay a greater sum to the education of the children than the ratepayers of London. I have heard a great many reckless assertions made in the course of the Debate. The hon. Member for West Islington complained that Devon, which was a wealthy county, got more relief than Cornwall, a poor county. I have taken the trouble to have the amount calculated. I find, so far from this being the case, that Devon, with double the population of Cornwall, receives only £945 under the Bill, whereas Cornwall gets £2,711. [*Cheers.*] Then there is another illustration given which I think shows the extreme equity of the operation of the Bill. It is said that in Berkshire there are only two places which receive relief under the Bill. Each place has practically a rate of 9d., the same number of children in the schools, and it is said, "How monstrous that under the Bill one place should get £18 and the other only £8." But the hon. Member omitted to tell the House that in the one case the 3d. rate produces 7s. 11d. and in the other case 6s.; so that the operation of the monstrous injustice of the Bill will be to give both places the same amount per child out of the rate, combined with the assistance given. A contrast has been made between Huddersfield and Middlesbrough; but the hon. Member who made it did not tell the

House that in Huddersfield the produce of the 3d. rate was 14s. 8d., while in Middlesbrough it was 8s. 3d., and Middlesbrough, being far more poor, gets more relief under the Bill than Huddersfield, which is the richer of the two places. Workington and Stockton-on-Tees were also mentioned as cases of differential treatment, but in Workington the 3d. rate is 4s. 6d. per child, while in Stockton it is 8s. 6d. Naturally, therefore, poor Workington gets a larger subsidy than Stockton. Attempts were also made to show that there are important places which do not get anything under the Bill, among the places being Liverpool. But in Liverpool the 3d. rate produces 27s. per child, or a sum greater than in London. Can anybody suggest any amendment which will bring a town like Liverpool, with a rate of only 3d. in the pound, producing 27s. per child, into the position of a town needing and receiving aid? I must point out that the purpose of this Bill is not a kind of prize-giving, as the hon. Member for Northampton seems to think. It is not intended that the Exchequer should give money to School Boards in proportion to the excellence of their schools and the good which they have done to the community. If that were the intention, you might well complain that towns like London and Liverpool and Manchester were left out. But there is no such intention. This is not a Bill to found prizes and rewards to local authorities for the way in which they have discharged their duties. It is a Bill to help those districts where the number of children to be educated bears an undue proportion to the rateable value, districts like West Ham, where there are many children and where the rateable value is low. The operation of the Bill, as far as can be foreseen from the rather rough statistics which we are able to lay before the House, will be in the opinion of the Committee of Council on Education to give assistance where it is most wanted. On the whole, they are very well satisfied with the apparent operation of the Measure. Before sitting down I must give the House one caution. This Return, which has been in everybody's hands, and which was prepared at the request of the right hon. Member for Rotherham, is necessarily a rough Return, and it is impossible for the Education Department to vouch for its accuracy. It is based upon financial statements, made by the clerks of School Boards, and the rate stated is sometimes the gross rate and sometimes the net, and we have no means of discriminating whether the rate given is the gross or the net rate. Therefore the localities mentioned in this Report must not reckon absolutely upon getting relief upon the figures given here. But when the amount to which each place is entitled comes to be estimated, of course accurate figures will be obtained, and the grant will be dispensed by the Committee of Council upon figures which are thoroughly trustworthy. I hope the House will now consent to Read the Bill a Second time. When the Committee stage is reached, if any hon. Members can suggest amendments under which the relief given can be made to operate in a more just manner, I can assure them that such amendments will receive most careful consideration. [*Cheers.*]

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) urged that the Opposition were entitled to protest against the inadequacy of the sum which was to be applied for relieving the strain upon the ratepayers. The strain in the case of the Voluntary Schools was much less severe, and yet they were to be assisted much more generously. This Bill was ludicrously inadequate to effect the object which it had in view, and the distribution of this small sum of money would not promote greater equality, but would create still greater anomalies and inequalities. The Vice President based the greater part of his case on the ground that he was making a very modest proposal to the House. It was because the proposal was so modest that they objected to it. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to what the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton had said respecting the motive which influenced those who introduced the Act of 1870, and particularly the intention of Clause 97, which the House was now asked to amend. What his right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton had said was this, that they based their claim for a large grant on the ground that the prophecies, the ideas and intentions of the framers of the Act of 1870 had, after the stress of time, largely broken down. The First Lord of the Treasury had himself supported the increased grant for Voluntary Schools on the ground that the compromise of the Act of 1870 had broken down, and that in order to keep those schools in existence it was necessary to give them additional assistance. Surely, then, the Opposition were entitled to argue that if the Government intended to place the educational system of this country on a new and enlarged basis they ought not to be tied and bound by the language of the 97th Section, and ought to deal with the question according to some plan which would be fairer to the different sections of ratepayers. The arguments of the Vice President and other supporters of the Bill were based upon a fallacy. Over and over again it had been stated that because the rateable value of a particular district was low it was a poor district which ought to receive a comparatively larger amount of this education dole. But as a matter of fact it was not the poverty or wealth of a particular district which measured the strain and stress of the burden on the ratepayers in that district. In London, to take an instance, a rate of a shilling in the pound for educational purposes was just as great a burden upon the workers there as it was in any poorer district in the country. A rate of 11d. in London was as great a burden on the ratepayers of London as a similar rate was on ratepayers of any other part of the Kingdom. It was a fallacy to say that one could in any sense measure the strain and stress which was to be met by this Bill of the rateable value of any particular district. Whilst in London, for example, the rateable value was very high, not only because there was much wealth, but also because the assessment had been estimated at a very high rate, and was increased every five years, whilst that was the case in London, in many other districts the assessments and assessable value was put at a very low figure. The real way to estimate the education rate as an extra burden was by considering the weight of the total rate and the education rate in a particular district, and not merely by weighing an extra penny in the education rate. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted the case of West Ham, and that undoubtedly was one of the cases in which there ought to be considerable relief. Would the hon. Member for North West Ham get up and say that his district would receive the amount of relief that it was entitled to? They must not take this Bill by itself. but must treat the two Bills of the Government as one whole, in order to ascertain what was the real relief given to a particular district. West Ham was perhaps the most necessitous of all the districts—in fact, this Bill had been called a West Ham and Walthamstow Relief Bill. But comparing the position of West Ham under the two Bills with the position of Preston, they found that the inequality of treatment was astoundingly great. The population of Preston was half that of West Ham, and its educational burden was one-tenth of that of West Ham, and yet the relief given in Preston would be £4,400, while in West Ham the relief given by this Bill, deducting what it received under the old 97th Section, would only be £10,600.

*Mr. ERNEST GRAY said that that figure was inaccurate. The sum which West Ham would receive under the two Bills would be much greater, about £20,000.

Mr. BUXTON said that the only basis for calculation available was the Return presented by the Vice President. The right hon. Gentleman, however, admitted that the statistics which it contained were inaccurate.

*Mr. GRAY said he was dealing with the total amount receivable under the two Bills.

Mr. BUXTON said he also was taking the two Bills together as a complete educational grant from the Government to necessitous Board Schools and necessitous Voluntary Schools. He was bound to say that he thought it was very unsatisfactory that the House should have to discuss a Bill of this kind in a hurry, when the right hon. Gentleman opposite himself said that his own return was largely inaccurate, and when they found a discrepancy between the figures of the right hon. Gentleman and the statement of the hon. Member below the Gangway. He wished to say a word with reference to the position of London. Taking the cases of London and Lancashire, and taking the two Bills together, he found that while in Lancashire, taking the Board Schools and Voluntary Schools together, the burden on the ratepayers and subscribers amounted to something like £400,000 a year, in London it amounted to over £1,500,000. When, therefore, the House came to consider the question of equality of burden, he could not see how it could be just or right that in the education policy of the Government, while the cost to the London ratepayers and subscribers amounted to more than four times the cost falling on the ratepayers and subscribers of Lancashire, the relief received in London should be only one-third of that received by the inhabitants of Lancashire. He thought it was obvious that however high might be the assessment in certain parts of London, when the poorer parts were considered, the burden of the education rate was far greater than it was in Lancashire. From his own point of view as a Member for one of the poorer districts of London, he considered that London was being very hardly treated by the Government. He would not treat London as a separate entity in any sense of the term if the Government had not treated these matters as matters of class and interest and locality; but he objected that under the Rating Bill of last year Londoners should have to pay £400,000 in order to give relief to the country districts, and that they should now be called upon to pay £120,000 to other parts of the country for what he did not believe would be any great step forward in educational progress, but would really lead to greater anomalies in the future, inasmuch as it was founded on great injustice as between the different classes of schools and the different classes of ratepayers. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said he would be unable to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire, though if the hon. Member had moved a direct negative to the Bill, he would have been able to give him his support. He considered that as the Bill stood it was a wrong to a large class of the ratepayers of the United Kingdom. This grant, though nominally a grant to the School Boards, was really a grant in relief of the ratepayers of certain districts. No doubt there were poor ratepayers in certain districts in Great Britain who were perhaps an object for the commiseration of the House, but in Ireland, which would have to find a portion of the money, the vast majority of the ratepayers were in the same positon as the small minority of the ratepayers of Great Britain, and thus the effect of the Bill would be to exaggerate enormously the fiscal injustice under which Ireland now laboured. This Bill must be taken in connection with the other Bills that had preceded it, and others that would doubtless come after. It could not be dissociated from the Agricultural Rating Bill of last year or from the Voluntary Schools Bill, which though an excellent Measure, was not, he believed, a just Measure, because it was not accompanied by a similar measure of justice to the Voluntary Schools of Ireland. And now this Bill was introduced without any proposal to afford similar relief to Scotland and Ireland, beyond some vague indication that the Government were contemplating proposals for the relief of Ireland. If he was told that there would be something of the same kind as the ridiculous Bill introduced the other night, all he could say was, that was not what Ireland wanted. The only way to give an equivalent to Ireland was to give similar relief to that given to England. He protested against the practice of giving large sums by way of relief to the wealthy and well-to-do ratepayers of England, while nothing was done for the poorer ratepayers of Ireland. He contended that if they went into the figures it would be found that the grant out of the Imperial funds for education in England was larger in proportion to the population than the grant from Imperial funds in Ireland. There were no means now of increasing the taxation in Ireland, and the plan was resorted to of making the Irish taxpayer bear a portion of the burden of education here in accordance with the wishes of the most selfish section of the English people. Although he should have to vote against the Amendment he protested against this plan of relieving the English ratepayer at the expense of the overburdened taxpayer in Ireland.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 122; Noes, 41.—(Division List, No. 186.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUND [CONTRIBUTION].

Resolution reported,

"That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to contribute, out of the revenues of India, such sums as may be required to meet certain liabilities under any Act of the present Session to make provision for the transfer of the assets, liabilities and management of the Regular Widows' Fund and of the Elders' Widows' Fund to the Secretary of State in Council of India."

Resolution agreed to.

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUNDS BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the Third time, and passed.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION [CHARGE].

Resolution reported,

"That it is expedient to authorise the charge on the revenues of India of any addition to the Superannuation or Retiring Allowances, which may become payable under any Act of the present Session to remove doubts as to the power of the Secretary of State in Council of India to grant Superannuation and Compensation Allowances in certain cases to officers on his establishment."

Resolution agreed to.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Considered in Committee and reported, without Amendment; to be read the Third time upon Thursday.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

APPEAL IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

NAVY AND MARINES (WILLS) ACT (1865) AMENDMENT BILL.

On the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) thought there should be some explanation of the Bill by one of the Law Officers of the Crown. He found that the provision of the Act which the Bill proposed to amend dispensed with the usual qualifications necessary in a valid will in the case of a person serving as a seaman or of a person who had ceased so to serve. He could conceive an instance in which the repeal of those words might produce a great hardship.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing) said the representatives of the Admiralty were not aware that the Bill would have come on so soon, and were therefore not present. But the point of the hon. Gentleman was a small one, and might very well be raised in Committee.

MR. PICKERSGILL said the point he had raised was the whole effect and substance of the Bill. In the circumstances he should move the adjournment of the Debate.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman's Motion is not seconded.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

VOLUNTEERS' BILL.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY to THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) moved the Second Reading of this Bill. The object of the Measure was to provide that fines imposed on Volunteers who had undertaken to make themselves efficient and who had failed to fulfil their engagements, thereby putting their corps to expense which was not covered by capitation grants, should be recoverable in a court of summary jurisdiction. Hitherto it had been supposed that those fines were recoverable in a court of summary jurisdiction, but the Court of Appeal had decided that that was not the case, as the fines were civil debts, and the Bill only proposed to put the matter in the position it was supposed to have occupied before the decision of the Court of Appeal.

MR. PICKERSGILL said he objected to the Bill, because it increased the powers of magistrates to send persons to prison in default of paying fines. At present a defaulting Volunteer could not be sent to prison for the non-payment of the fines imposed on him unless those prosecuting could prove his ability to pay since the date of the Order. There were over 7,000 persons at present in prison, not for criminal offences, but in default of paying fines, and he objected to any extension of powers which would lead to an increase in that class of persons.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said this was a question simply between the Volunteer corps and the individual, and not between the Volunteers and the nation. The Volunteer gave an undertaking that he would either do the service required of him or pay the equivalent of the capitation grant, which, however, he might earn by very small exertion on his own part. A man signed with an absolute knowledge of what he undertook, and it was in his power to carry out his undertaking. He pointed out that the Measure was a necessary and desirable one.

Bill read a Second Time, and committed for Thursday.

SUPPLY [9TH APRIL].

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897-8.

CLASS 1.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £238,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1898, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £159,100 (including an additional sum of £1,100), be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1898, in respect of sundry public buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

Resolutions agreed to.

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House."

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.) asked the First Commissioner of Works whether the fees at Holyrood could be abolished at once. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman had agreed that the fees should cease after this year. He did not see why any charge should be made at Holyrood, when in similar palaces in England no such charge was made. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would approach the Treasury with a view to seeing whether the charge could not be done away with now.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) said he was anxious that there should be similarity of treatment between the two countries in this respect. He had considered the matter, and as soon as it was possible the fee should be abolished. It was not quite so easy as the hon. Member thought. There was a negotiation with the Lord Provost and the Corporation of Edinburgh, which it would be necessary first to carry through. Moreover, if the charge were abolished at once a supplementary Estimate would be required, as it would be impossible to carry on the caretaking of the Palace unless they had the appropriation of these fees. As soon as he could make the necessary arrangements the fees should cease.

Resolution agreed to.

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £70,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £23,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £25,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the extension of the Admiralty Buildings."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £39,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of miscellaneous legal buildings, viz., County Courts, Metropolitan Police Courts, and Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland."

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £16,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £16,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, and for the maintenance of certain cemeteries abroad."

Resolutions agreed to.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

BICYCLES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

FOREIGN PRISON MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (1st April) further adjourned till Thursday.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES' JURISDICTION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

BURIAL GROUNDS LOANS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES].

Resolution reported,

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Commissioners of Works under any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of Land for the extension of the Patent Office, and for purposes connected therewith."

Resolution agreed to.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted and 40 Members not being present,

The House was Adjourned at a Quarter after Nine of the Clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 27th April 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

TENURE AND OWNERSHIP OF LAND IN TOWNS.

Mr. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport): To call attention to the Tenure and Ownership of Land in Towns; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 25th May.*]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (OFFICIAL EXPENSES).

Mr. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): To call attention to the Election Expenses of candidates for Parliament; and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Official Expenses in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be a charge upon the Public Revenue."—[*Tuesday, 25th May.*]

INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY (JUDICIAL DUTIES, EXPENSE).

Mr. A. HELDER (Whitehaven): To call attention to the expense incurred by the Incorporated Law Society in performing the Judicial Duties imposed upon it by 51 and 52 Vic., c. 65; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 25th May.*]

BRITISH TRADE WITH CANADA.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To move, "That this House desires to express its grateful and fraternal recognition to the Government and people of the Dominion of Canada of the generous and patriotic fiscal proposals in favour of British trade and labour announced on 23rd April in the House of Commons at Ottawa and already in force, and expresses its hope that similar action may commend itself to the wisdom of the people of Australasia, Canada, and other Colonies." ["Hear, hear!"]—[*Tuesday, 25th May.*]

QUESTIONS.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (SCOTTISH WATERS).

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, having regard to the fact that a large number of torpedo and picket boats are lying idle at Portsmouth and Chatham, he will place at the disposal of the Scottish Office one or more of these boats for service on the northern coasts of Scotland for the purpose of protecting the interests of the line fishermen against illegal trawlers?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir.

TRUSTEE AND POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he would state the total sum provided by the Government to make good deficiencies in connection with trustee savings banks since the passing of the Savings Bank Act?

The hon. Member also asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he would state the total profits on the Post Office Savings Bank since the foundation of that institution?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): The statement asked for by the hon. Member as to Trustee and Post Office Savings Banks cannot be conveniently given in the form of an answer to a Question. I would refer him to House of Commons Paper No. 75 of this Session and to the last Report of the Postmaster General, where he will, I think, find all the information he requires.

LIGHTHOUSE (TUIMPAN HEAD).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is now in a position to state when the construction of a lighthouse at Tuimpan Head will be commenced?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): The Board of Trade have now sanctioned the necessary expenditure for the construction of this lighthouse, and I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that steps will at once be taken for the preparation of the required plans, etc., with a view to the early commencement of the work.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

SIR EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he has concluded his arrangements for the purpose of enabling Members of both Houses of Parliament to witness the procession of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, intended to commemorate the sixtieth year of her reign; if so, will he be good enough to inform the House the nature of the arrangements; and whether any and what number of places will be allotted to Members in addition to their own?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The arrangements are concluded so far as I am concerned. Members of both Houses of Parliament will have one ticket free and two tickets for which 12s. 6d. each will be paid. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] Members of the House of Lords will have a stand set apart for them in front of the National Gallery. Members of the House of Commons will have allotted to them stands on Speaker's Green and in New Palace Yard.

MR. THOMAS B. CURRAN (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, when he is considering the accommodation for Members and officials of the House to view the Royal Procession on the 22nd of June, he will endeavour to find space for the members of the Press in the Lobby and Gallery of the House of Commons?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I hope it may be possible to make some provision of the nature indicated for members of the Press in attendance at the Houses of Parliament.

MR. T. B. CURRAN asked how many seats the right hon. Gentleman hoped to be able to place at the disposal of the Press Gallery?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The hon. Gentleman must give me a little time to consider that question, but I hope to be able to provide ample accommodation.

MR. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) asked whether it was intended to erect any seats in St. James's Park?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No, Sir; the only seats we propose to erect are those for the accommodation of the Members of the two Houses of Parliament and of certain Government officers.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dundee (Sir JOHN LENG), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can now state what arrangements have been or are likely to be made for the representation of Crimean veterans in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Her Majesty's reign?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The military authorities have carefully considered the proposals to secure a representation of the veterans of the Army on 22nd June, and it is considered that they will be most fittingly represented by the pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, who number over 400, and are all men of long service, of whom the great majority have campaign records. A special position will be allotted to them to see the procession.

PIERS (LEWIS).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has received a communication from the Lewis District Committee expressing deep regret that the promised grant for the construction of piers at Bayble and Valtos, Island of Lewis, has been withdrawn; whether he is aware that plans for these piers have been approved by the Board of Trade, and lodged within the specified time; that tenders have been advertised for; and that the people of the district have undertaken to give a large proportion of the cost of the piers in free labour; and whether, in view of these circumstances, he will arrange for the construction of these piers at an early date?

*MR. H. T. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews Burghs, for the LORD ADVOCATE): The Secretary for Scotland has received a communication from the Lewis District Committee, as stated by the hon. Member. He is substantially correct in what he says as to the proposed pier at Bayble, but the project for the one to be constructed at Valtos has not yet been entertained by the Secretary for Scotland, nor, so far as he is aware, have the plans been yet submitted to the Board of Trade, for the reason that the County Council has not yet given the guarantees always required in such cases. The Secretary for Scotland is not in a position to give a definite undertaking at present as regards the construction of these piers.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any, and, if so, what, reply has been received to the representations made by the Postmaster General on the subject of an improved Limited Mail Service from Dundalk to Cavan, Belturbet, and Enniskillen?

Mr. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the postal authorities at Dublin have communicated with the traffic manager of the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland respecting the acceleration of the morning mails from Dundalk to Enniskillen and the intervening districts; and, if so, with what results?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): The Post Office has been in communication with the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland respecting the acceleration of the day mail to Enniskillen. It is found that the Company are not willing to effect the improvement, except upon terms which the Postmaster General would not be justified in accepting.

MASSACRE AT EGHIN.

Mr. C. J. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can inform the House whether the *pro memoriâ* presented to the Porte by the British Ambassador at Constantinople (Turkey, No. 7, 1897), on or about the 17th of December last, respecting Hakki Bey, the Kaïmakan at Eghin, Colonel Kara Bey, the Mayor of Eghin, and Sehlik Zadé Hafiz Effendi, with whom, as Sir Philip Currie states, rests the responsibility for the unprovoked massacre of the Armenians by Kurds and Turks extending over three days at Eghin, has met with any satisfactory reply from the Porte; and whether those individuals, or any of them, have been dismissed from the Sultan's service, and received the further punishment which the Ambassador considered they deserved?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople reports that, in reply to constant representations on his part, the Porte has ordered that a searching inquiry shall be held at once to establish the responsibility of those concerned in the Eghin massacre, and to punish severely those who shall be proved to have abused their authority, and that instructions had been sent to the Vali of Kharput.

PIRBRIGHT RANGES (VOLUNTEERS).

Colonel DALBIAC (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he could explain to the House what was the reason for the order by the Officer Commanding the Aldershot Division suspending all firing at Pirbright Ranges on Saturday, 10th April; whether it was necessary that such order should extend to firing after 4 p.m.; and whether, in view of the fact that a considerable number of Volunteers who have been accorded the privilege of using these ranges on Saturday afternoons were present, at considerable expense, on that afternoon and unable to use the ranges, any such order which may be necessary in future may be promulgated two or three days in advance, in order to give officers commanding Volunteers reasonable time to inform those under their command of the order, and so that unnecessary expense to corps and much needless discouragement to officers and men may be avoided?

Mr. BRODRICK: The General Officer Commanding at Aldershot, in response to a request from the Master of the Hounds, who were to draw Chobham Ridges on the 10th April, suspended firing at the Pirbright Ranges on that day. He was not aware that the Pirbright Range had been promised on that day to certain Volunteers; but on learning the fact, telegrams were sent to the headquarters of the Volunteer corps concerned. Apparently these failed to stop about 50 Volunteers, who arrived on the 10th, and were allowed to fire that afternoon on the Bisley Range. Arrangements will be made that longer notice shall be given in future.

CRETE.

Mr. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any agreement has been come to by the European Concert in regard to the evacuation of Crete by the Turkish troops now in that island; whether, if so, these troops will be allowed, after leaving Crete, to join in active operations of the Turkish forces against Greece; whether, in view of the advantage to the Ottoman Empire of being relieved from defending Crete against the Greek forces, by the Concert having proclaimed the neutrality of that island, it is intended to declare any portion of the Greek kingdom neutral, and to forbid its attack by the Turkish forces; and, whether the prohibition in regard to landing provisions in Crete is still operative?

*Mr. CURZON: No agreement has been come to for the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Crete. It is the opinion of the majority of the Powers that the Greek troops should leave first. Moreover, the Admirals reported a short time ago that the deportation of the Turkish troops was a grave question and must not be hastily conducted, there being 49,000 unprotected Cretan Mohammedans in Candia alone, whom the withdrawal of the Turkish garrison would expose to imminent peril. The conditions in regard to the troops being employed subsequently on either side would no doubt be similar. The Powers have no intention of occupying any portion of Greek territory, and declaring it neutral. The question of the exact method in which the blockade shall be applied as regards provisions is one for the Admirals; but the latest report from them, dated yesterday, is to the effect that there is no scarcity of food in the interior.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could say whether this country was one of the majority?

*Mr. CURZON: I would rather give no answer to such a Question as that. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Colonel Vassos and the Cretans have been informed what is the precise extent of Cretan territory which the Powers regard as neutral ground; and, whether the Powers guarantee that no troops, regular or irregular, shall be allowed to sally forth from that neutral territory for the purpose of attackng Colonel Vassos or the Cretans?

*Mr. CURZON: Her Majesty's Government are not aware of the exact terms of the communications that have recently passed between the Admirals and Colonel Vassos, nor to what extent such communications are now possible. At an interview which the Italian Consul had with him on the 20th April, Colonel Vassos stated that he feared great complications might arise, but would do his best to prevent them. The insurgent leaders have unquestionably received full information as to the limits of the military cordon established by the Powers. The object of the latter is that the whole island should be neutral, and the Turkish troops are restrained as far as possible from attacking the Christian Cretans, but as the latter are constantly assailing the positions round the towns occupied by the Powers, and have been supplied either from Greek sources or otherwise with cannon for the purpose, the attempt to obtain a cessation of all hostilities has not hitherto been successful, and measures of resistance are at times necessitated for the safety of the European forces and the population under their protection.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): May I ask whether the neutralisation of this territory is carried out by the authority of the Powers, exclusively under the authority of the Sultan, or whether it is against the wishes of the Sultan?

*Mr. CURZON: There is no reason whatever to believe that it is contrary to the wishes of the Sultan, but the constitution of the military cordon has undoubtedly been undertaken on their responsibility by the Admirals of the allied Fleets.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR: Has the sanction of the Sultan been formally obtained?

*Mr. CURZON: The entire proceedings of the Powers in Crete are subject to and have received the sanction of the Sultan. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. STEVENSON: Are we to understand that a declaration has been made by the Powers that the whole island should be considered neutral, or simply the territory within the military cordon?

*Mr. CURZON: I think the hon. Member is confusing two different things. The territory within the military cordon is under the protection of the Powers exercised by means of their forces. It is the design and the desire of the Powers that in the war between Greece and Turkey the whole island, which they have taken under their protection, should be regarded as neutral.

TURCO-GREEK WAR.

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, war having been declared between Turkey and Greece, coal in a neutral bottom intended for Turkey or Greece is contraband of war; if coal in a Greek or Turkish bottom intended for Greece or Turkey is contraband of war; and, if coal in a Greek or Turkish bottom intended for a neutral State is contraband of war?

*Mr. CURZON: I am afraid that I can only reply to the hon. Member in the same sense as in replies to similar Questions that have been addressed to Her Majesty's Government on previous occasions. It would be a dangerous and unusual course for Her Majesty's Government to attempt to define by a general statement what is or is not contraband of war. Coal has been held not to be contraband as a general rule, but it is possible that it might in certain cases become so.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in case of war the question of what was or what was not contraband of war was not one exclusively for the Prize Court to determine?

*Mr. CURZON: I always refrain from expressing any opinions in this House upon questions of international law. ["Hear!"]

Mr. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Times* newspaper of yesterday (26th April), in which their special Correspondent, writing from Pentepigadia Pass, asserts that the Turks killed and mutilated all the Greek wounded who fell into their hands; and whether he is able to confirm or disprove this assertion?

*Mr. CURZON: I have seen the passage referred to, but we have received no official information with regard to the allegation. May I add in reply to this and similar Questions, of which the hon. Member himself put two to me yesterday, that it is impossible for the Government to have any official information of detailed incidents at the scene of war, as they have no representative on the spot.

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): asked whether, considering the serious nature of the allegation which had been made by *The Times* Correspondent, the Government intended to inquire into its truth?

*Mr. CURZON: I am afraid that it lies outside the scope of Government duties to inquire into the accuracy of all the various statements on one side or the other that appear in the newspapers. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. MORTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, according to the theory of the Government— [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Sir EDWARD GOURLEY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether any and what notifications have been issued by the two belligerent Powers, Greece and Turkey, relative to neutral flags and neutral merchandise; (2) will such Power respect the enemy's flag unless carrying contraband of war; and (3) can he state whether corn and other articles of food will be deemed neutral or contraband?

*Mr. CURZON: The Greek Minister notified to Her Majesty's Government on the 21st instant that orders had been given to the Hellenic land and sea forces in conformity with the Declaration of Paris of April 16th 1856. No notification on the subject has been received from the Turkish Government, but they are parties to the same declaration, and may be equally expected to observe it. In answer to the second paragraph, Turkey and Greece would presumably respect neutral goods in enemy's vessels with the exception of contraband of war, and as regards the latter, Her Majesty's Government have uniformly declined to define it.

"MAYFLOWER" (THE LOG OF THE).

Mr. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether authority would be given to the Historical Record Commission to print copies of the volume descriptive of th records of the *Mayflower*, which has been given by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the late American Ambassador for transmission to Washington, in order that the same may be more generally distributed in this country and in the United States of America?

Mr. HANBURY: I assume that the hon. Member means the Historical Manuscripts Commission. It is not for the Treasury to decide what documents that Commission should select for publication, and I would therefore suggest that the hon. Member should communicate direct with the Commission, the Secretary to which is Mr. Cartwright, of the Public Record Office. As to the general distribution of copies in this country, apart from any question of distribution in the United States, it should be remembered that the publications of this Commission are treated as Parliamentary Papers, and, as such, are sold at rates which do not at all represent the real cost of production. It is also the fact that a large number are circulated gratis to Members of both Houses of Parliament.

TOKAT MASSACRE.

Mr. MORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Military Commander at Tokat, who is referred to in the correspondence relative to the Armenian Question, presented to Parliament in February 1896 (Turkey, No. 2, 1896, p. 329), as having shown great energy in protecting the town and preventing an attempted massacre of Armenians there on 15th November 1895, was removed by the Turkish Government shortly before the recent massacre at Tokat?

***Mr. CURZON**: We have never heard that the Military Commander at Tokat to whom the hon. Member alludes, was removed under the circumstances mentioned in the Question.

Mr. MORTON asked whether, in view of the fact that the report of the removal of the Military Commander in question was reported in the *Daily News* of the 24th of last month, the right hon. Gentleman would inquire into the truth of the report?

***Mr. CURZON**: I think that the hon. Member is under some misapprehension. The Military Commander of Tokat, to whom I think he refers, is the officer who was removed after the massacres, because he was held to have been partly responsible for them.

STATIONERY OFFICE PRINTING CONTRACTS.

Mr. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when will copies of the remaining contracts entered into by Her Majesty's Stationery Office be printed and circulated, in continuation of those dated 12th and 13th January of the present year?

Mr. HANBURY: The four contracts already presented to which the hon. Member refers are contracts for Parliamentary printing, and the Resolutions passed by the House of Lords and the House of Commons on March 30th and 24th respectively, 1882, require those contracts to lie upon the Table for 40 days before taking effect. It has not hitherto been the practice to make public the other contracts for printing, but I am distinctly in favour of publicity whenever there are no practical arguments against it, and the contracts referred to shall, as they are completed, be laid upon the Table. I do not, however, think that it is necessary to incur the cost of printing them, as the form is in all respects practically identical with that of the four already printed.

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS.

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state when the proposed division of the Officers' List of the Royal Artillery is to be carried out?

Mr. BRODRICK: Some details of this division are still under consideration; but the necessary arrangements will shortly be completed.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, under the working of the Bill to amend Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, the Chesterfield School Board (which makes up its next annual accounts in February 1898) will receive any benefit from this Bill before March 1899?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): All School Board accounts are made up to the 29th of September. Any grant to which the Chesterfield School Board may be entitled under the Bill will be paid as soon after the 29th of September of this year as the claim has been received and the Education Department are in a position to examine it.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether Wellingborough should not be included in the list of School Boards entitled to grants under the Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill; whether there are other School Boards in the same position; and whether he will issue a supplementary list of Boards so entitled?

SIR J. GORST: Yes, Sir; the Wellingborough School Board is entitled to a grant. No doubt, there are many Boards in the same position; but, as I have several times stated, the materials in the possession of the Education Department do not enable them to furnish anything like an accurate Return.

MEDICAL INSPECTORSHIP OF PRISONS.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Dr. Gover has resigned the Medical Inspectorship of Prisons; and, if so, whether he will take the opportunity to appoint a medical man to be a member of the Prisons Board, in accordance with the recommendation of the late Committee on Prisons, and thus assimilate the constitution of the Prisons Board in England to that of the Prisons Board in Ireland?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): It is the case that Dr. Gover has resigned his appointment, but I have already decided, after giving full consideration to the recommendation of the Prisons Committee, that it is not possible to dispense with the services of a medical inspector, and have, therefore, appointed Dr. Smalley, the medical officer at Parkhurst, in succession to Dr. Gover. This does not, of course, determine the question of the appointment of a medical member of the Board, but I do not at present contemplate making any such appointment.

CANADIAN TARIFF.

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies (1) whether he has observed that the new Canadian tariff provides for preferential trade relations with the Mother Country; and (2) whether Her Majesty's Government will embrace the earliest opportunity of recognising and, if practicable, reciprocating the action of the Government of the Dominion in this important matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. Her Majesty's Government cordially appreciate the friendly spirit which is shewn by the action of the Dominion Government, but I understand that the proposals do not depend on any alteration of the system of free trade established in the United Kingdom.

ALLOTMENTS (CORNWALL).

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the County Council for the County of Cornwall, after holding the inquiries required by Sections 9 and 10 of the Local Government Act of 1894, made an Order authorising the Parish Council of Veryan to hire certain lands compulsorily for allotments; and that the Local Government Board have disallowed such Order; and whether he will state the reasons for reversing the decision arrived at after inquiry by the representatives of the ratepayers of the county?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The facts are as stated in the Question. A local inquiry was held by one of the inspectors of the Board, at which the evidence of those interested was taken. It appeared that there was no sufficient proof that the Parish Council were unable to hire land by agreement, or that there was any general demand for allotments in the parish. At the time of the inquiry there were only two applicants for allotments in the land proposed to be hired compulsorily, and it appeared that the Parish Council had not been able to let for allotments a field which they had previously hired for that purpose. For these and other reasons, and among them the probability that a burden would have been imposed upon the parish, the Board arrived at the conclusion that the Order should not be confirmed.

FUGITIVE SLAVES AT MOMBASA.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether his attention has been drawn to a statement made by Bishop Tucker, that should a slave run away in Mombasa and take refuge within the ten mile limit, the Commissioner, on being applied to, issues what is practically a demand for his surrender; (2) why soldiers in the pay of the British Government are employed in the search for runaways; and (3) whether he can give the House any information on the subject?

*MR. CURZON: The facts on the mainland are not quite correctly represented in the first paragraph. Her Majesty's Commissioner has instructions to exercise his own discretion in each particular case, and is under no obligation to act in the manner suggested in the Question.

·CREWE (REPRESENTATION OF).

MR. LABOUCHERE: It will be convenient to a large number of persons at Crewe and elsewhere if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be good enough to say whether he has received any intimation from the present sitting Member for Crewe that he is anxious to serve Her Majesty as Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds, and whether, if so, a favourable answer has been given? [*Laughter.*]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: This appears to be one of the numerous instances in which a newspaper report is incorrect. No such application has been received.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then may I ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies how it comes that he, a Minister of the Crown, sent a letter to Mr. Marriott sympathising with him as a candidate and hoping he would be returned? [*Laughter*].

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I always reply to all letters addressed to me in suitable terms. [*Loud laughter.*]

TRANSVAAL (UITLANDERS).

MR. F. A. NEWDIGATE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of Cape Colony has received an intimation that under no circumstances would the Imperial Government insist upon the redress of the grievances of the Transvaal Uitlanders?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No communication of the kind referred to has passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Cape Colony.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. W. S. ROBSON (South Shields) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government would consent to take Class II., Foreign Office Vote, next Friday night?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I had not proposed to take Class II., Foreign Office Vote, next Friday, though I am perfectly ready to conform the plans of the Government to the wishes of the House with regard to the arrangements of Supply, as I have always been under similar circumstances. The state of the case with regard to Supply is this: We are pledged to take Friday, May 14, for Irish Supply. There are two Fridays before that. We have had seven discussions upon foreign affairs in the course of the present Session, and on the whole I am disposed to think, unless a demand is made upon the Government by the front Opposition Bench, that it will be more convenient to proceed in ordinary course with the Civil Service

Votes next Friday than to take the Foreign Office Vote on Friday. No doubt a discussion later on in the Session will be imperatively demanded in the interests of free debate. Therefore, I will give no definite reply at the present time; but will endeavour to find out whether there is any widespread wish for another discussion on foreign affairs, and if an intimation is made to me to that effect from responsible quarters, I shall of course accede to such a desire.

Sir C. DILKE asked the President of the Board of Trade why the Government did not proceed last night with the Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill, the second principal Measure of the evening, in consequence of which the House was counted out shortly after 9 o'clock?

Mr. RITCHIE: I do not think it was in consequence of that. The reason the Bill in question was not proceeded with was that there was a general desire expressed by those interested that, having regard to certain matters of controversy that would arise, it would not be desirable or in accordance with custom that such a Measure should be taken the first night after the House reassembled.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tomorrow till Wednesday, 5th May.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for the Second Reading this day read and discharged; Bill withdrawn.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred from this day till Thursday.

MOTION.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (SCOTLAND) LOANS.

Bill to amend the Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Act 1891, and the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act 1892, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Haldane and Mr. Orr-Ewing; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Thursday, and to be printed.—[Bill 208.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA (OFFICERS OF GENERAL LIST).

*Mr. J. **HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE** (Sussex, Horsham) rose to call attention to the grievance of the Officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions; and to move:—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the grievances of the officers on the General List of the Indian Army in the matter of their succession to Colonels' allowances, and to report to the House thereon."

He pointed out that the officers felt that they had a real grievance to complain of, and that there was no tribunal to which they could appeal except the House of Commons. He could not conceive why it was that the Government, who were so ready to refer every controversial question to the consideration of a Committee or a Royal Commission, should have hesitated to refer this matter to a Committee. The Government had been very prolific in appointing Committees and Royal Commissions. These officers felt they had a legitimate grievance, and the question was of serious importance to them, because it represented a loss of something like £400 a year. They claimed that they were entitled to Colonels' allowances. It was felt by them also to be a hardship that officers who were their juniors in the Service should have the advantage of the privileges which were denied to them. One case had been brought to his notice in which an officer who had served in command of a regiment did not receive his Colonel's allowance, while his second in command and actually his junior in entering the Service did. These were officers who joined the Service between 1859 and 1861, and were nominated under the old conditions of things by the directors of the East India Company. Every one joined under the same conditions as the officers of the East India Company's Service. They were appointed by the directors; they paid their passage out to India, and they had to this day to subscribe to the old East India Company's funds, established for the relief of widows and orphans. At the time when these officers were nominated, their future position was uncertain. The Mutiny was scarcely at an end, and there was a question in the minds of the authorities at home as to what would be the future of the East India Company's Service. When nominated, each officer was asked to sign a paper, which contained, among other questions the following:—

> "Have you been informed that all the appointments now made are to be subject to any alterations that may be decided on?"

He thought the last words were of considerable importance in estimating the position of these officers at the present day. What was the position of affairs at that time? First, considerable variations had been introduced in the wording of that question from time to time. When it came under the consideration of the India Office, it stood there simply "subject to any alterations that may be decided on," but the India Office, in considering these claims, had more than once altered the phraseology, turning the question into one asking these gentlemen, if they accepted their appointments "subject to any alteration which may be subsequently made in the condition of service." The explanation was perfectly plain and simple. It was to be found in a Despatch written by the Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy on September 30, 1859, in which a communication was made in reference to the probability of some change being made in the constitution of the Indian Army. It was decided in December following by the Government that all future appointments should be made "subject to any alteration that may be decided on." This showed the reason and the intention of putting the question to those gentlemen who had been appointed. A Royal Commission was sitting at that time to decide on the future position of the officers, and on what lines the Indian forces should be reorganised. He contended that the words "decided on" imported a conclusion of the matter at the moment under consideration. It was not subject to any alteration hereafter; it was subject to any alteration which might be decided on. He suggested that the House must lay weight on the word "decided," and the answer to that was to be found in the Royal Commission which was sitting to decide on the future of the Indian Army. The Henley Clause gave particular privileges and rights to those who had served in the forces of the East India Company; but while the officers did not base their claim on that clause, or on the fact that as cadets they were appointed as officers of the East India Company, they did base their case on the fact that they were officers of the Indian Army. The Henley Clause stated (21 and 22 Vic. c. 106, 1858) that the officers were—

> "to be entitled to the like pay, pension allowances and privileges, and the like advantages as regards promotion and otherwise as if they had continued in the service of the Company."

Then, according to Section 57 of the same clause, it was—

> "lawful for Her Majesty, by Order in Council, to alter or regulate the terms and conditions of service under which persons hereafter entering Her Majesty's Indian Forces shall be commissioned."

Any Order in Council was to be laid before Parliament, but he had searched, and he did not believe any such Order could be found which purported to alter the conditons of the service under which these gentlemen joined. They were officers of the Indian Army, and as such were entitled to those rights and privileges which had since been taken away. There was a distinction between the Honourable East India Company's Service and the Indian Army. A great deal of the confusion which had attended the consideration of this particular question was due to the fact that no sufficient distinction had been drawn between the officers of the East India Company's Service and those who belonged to the Indian Army. The officers for whom he was speaking claimed—and claimed rightly—to be officers of the Indian Army. That they were entitled to that position was made sufficiently clear by the Governor General's Order of 1861. When these officers arrived in India, the condition of things was an uncertain one. It was not known what their future was to be. But the result of the Royal Commission was practically that the

Indian Army was split up into three divisions. There was the local list, comprising those who opted to serve in the local forces in India; there was the general list, comprising those who volunteered for the general service of the Crown; and there was the Staff Corps, created for the first time, of which every officer who had since joined the Indian Army had been a member. All the officers who belonged to the East India Company's Service were given the right of choosing to which of these Services they would belong. The Governor General's Order, No. 960, of 1861, said:—

> "According to the declaration made by these young officers, they have no choice, but the option may be given them, in common with other young officers of the Indian Army, to volunteer for general or local service or for Staff Corps."

He laid stress on the words "in common with other young officers of the Indian Army," because those words clearly indicated that they were officers of the Indian Army, and this option was given to them, in common with other officers of the Indian Army, to volunteer for general or local service or for the Staff Corps. They volunteered for the local service. In a Despatch dated July 31, 1862, Sir Charles Wood, the then Secretary of State, dealt with the whole question. Apparently the Government of Bombay had recommended that each Lieutenant-Colonel should be promoted to a colonelcy, and receive a Colonel's allowance after the expiration of ten years. Sir C. Wood decided that:—

> "all officers who may have held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel on January 1, 1862, will also be entitled to promotion to the superior grade of Colonel, with Colonel's allowances, if the step come to them in the ordinary course, before the completion of 12 years' service as Lieutenant-Colonel; but when these Lieutenant-Colonels have been removed from the lists the promotion of those whose Commissions bear date on January 1, 1862, or subsequently, will only be made, as in the Staff Corps, after 12 years' service in that grade."

Here it was clearly laid down that those officers who attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel after January 1st, 1862, would be entitled to a Colonel's allowances after 12 years' service as Lieutenant-Colonel. In this Despatch Sir C. Wood also said:—

> "The principle upon which the succession to Colonel's allowances of officers of the Indian Army who have not joined the Staff Corps or the new Line Regiments is to be hereafter regulated, is to be considered as determined by this arrangement."

Here, then, they had this 12 years' arrangement clearly laid down, and it was expressly stated that the principle upon which the succession of these gentlemen to Colonels' allowances was to be regulated was to be considered as determined by this arrangement. He did not know whether the India Office proposed to rest their case upon the ground that these gentlemen were not officers of the Indian Army. If that was their intention, he would refer them to the official Army List for this year, where they would find the names of these gentlemen under the head of "Indian Army, General List." The next Despatch to which he would call attention was the Despatch of June 17, 1864, written by Sir C. Wood to the Governor General of India. It began by saying that—

> "it was also considered desirable, on general grounds, to remove, as far as possible, all distinctions between the officers of Her Majesty's general and Indian Armies, and to form them prospectively into one united body, retaining for the Indian officers in the meantime such advantages as were peculiar to their service."

Here it should be observed the distinction was drawn between the Indian officers and the general officers—in other words, between those on the local list and those on the General List. The distinction drawn was not between officers of the East India Company and the officers of the "Indian Army." Sir C. Wood went on to say:—

> "It might perhaps have prevented a good deal of misunderstanding if the measures for these various objects, which were distinct in themselves, had been undertaken separately, but so much was inevitable, and it was so desirable that the full extent of any changes should be known at once, and that men's minds should not be left in uncertainty as to their future condition, that it was determined to carry into effect, without loss of time, all the measures required for the changes which were to be made."

Those were grave and serious words, and the men who read that Despatch, and determined their future careers on the wording of that Despatch were entitled to rely upon it. In view of that declaration, it passed belief that in 1882 a new and further change would be made wholly to their disadvantage. In the 19th paragraph of the Despatch the Secretary of State said:—

> "It appears that of the officers of the Indian Army who joined the Line Regiments the whole of the Artillery and Engineers, and those who joined the Staff Corps, have been generally benefited by the change."

Then came the words:—

> "If to this number be added the whole of the officers who entered the Service since 1858 on conditions subject to any change that might be introduced into the Service, it will be seen that there will remain a comparatively small number who can have any real cause of complaint."

Showing clearly that these officers (for there were none others to whom this description could apply) were to be "benefited by the change." A subsequent paragraph of the Despatch ran:—

> "The general promotion of the Indian officers will be accelerated, and to every officer, including the Cadet who entered the Service so lately as December 1861, his promotion through every grade, with the pay thereunto belonging, as if the whole native Army of India had been kept up, is assured, and his right to Indian pension is maintained."

These extracts showed what assurances were given to the officers on the General List of the Indian Army, to whom alone they were applicable. In another paragraph these words occurred:—

> "Nor is it probable that more than a very few cases can occur in which an officer will not attain the Colonel's allowance after a shorter total period of service, even though he may remain rather longer in the grade of Lieutenant-Colonel."

Then the 81st paragraph stated:—

> "With this measure the arrangements as regards the officers of the Indian Army will be closed. The advantages which have been conferred upon the majority of those officers have already been pointed out, and it cannot be doubted that under the system now established the officers of the Indian Army will, for the most part, attain to the several regimental grades, including that of Colonel, with Colonel's allowance, in a shorter period of service than they would have done had the several Staff Corps not been formed and had no change in the constitution of the Indian Army taken place."

He did not think a more explicit pledge could be given to any body of men than that which was given in the Despatch of 1864 from which he had read. That that was the view taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton was clear from an answer the right hon. Gentleman gave to a question put by Sir Richard Temple in 1895 on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Henry Fowler) said:—

> "The passage in the Order of 1864 refers to the prospects of promotion and pension under the rules then in force, including the succession to the Colonel's allowance; but as regards the officers who entered the Service since 1858, this promise is subject to any change that might be introduced into the Service."

The House would see that the right hon. Gentleman distinctly called it a promise —["hear, hear!"]—a promise that these officers should have the right of succession to the Colonel's allowance after 12 years' service as Lieut.-Colonel. He now came to the last Act. The House would hardly believe that 18 years afterwards —in 1882—although in the meanwhile entrance into the Staff Corps had been closed to these gentlemen, entrance into which would have secured to them this allowance, they were told that instead of getting their rights after they had served 12 years as Lieut.-Colonel, they were to be put on a pension of £750 a year, which meant a clear and absolute loss to them of nearly £400 a year. Thus these particular gentlemen had been singled out from among all those serving in Her Majesty's Indian Army for this treatment. After relying on the promise given in the Despatch of 1864, and after having done good service for Her Majesty, they were told that instead of being entitled after 12 years' service as Lieut.-Colonel to the Colonel's allowance, they were reduced to a pension of £750 a year, and were told to be thankful for that. He need hardly say that he had no personal interest in the case of these gentlemen. ["Hear, hear!"] He had taken it up as a matter of duty. He had been exercised in his mind to see what possible answer could be made to the claims of these Gentlemen. Of course, he was well aware that the Government had always the power to deal with those in their service as they pleased; but power was one thing and right was another—["hear, hear!"] —and he did not propose to discuss the question from the basis of what it was in the power of the Government to do, but from the basis of what was the right and honest thing to do. He believed that considerable reliance was placed on the declaration which these gentlemen had signed, but there could be no question that all the subsequent alterations and emendations did not exist in the original answer received. Then, again, the question had sometimes been raised that these gentlemen were not officers in the Indian Army, but to this day their names appeared in the official Army List as such, so that that ground of objection disappeared. Again, it had sometimes been repeated in the voluminous correspondence on the subject that these officers were better off than they might have expected to be; but they had not got what had been promised to them, and they were not so well off as they had a right to expect. The probability of succession to the Colonel's allowance had been considered by a Committee, whose finding was embodied in a Despatch, and he found that that Committee reported that the 12 years' term was two years in excess of the fair term, the average of which had been a little over 10 years; so that these officers might fairly have expected to get their Colonel's allowance after 10 years' service as Lieut.-Colonel. [" Hear, hear !"] Then, finally, they were told that the assurance given in the Despatch of 1864 had been fulfilled. These gentlemen would not be asking the House to consider their case that day if that assurance had been fulfilled, and he believed it would pass the ingenuity of the noble Lord to make out that it had been fulfilled in any shape or form. [" Hear, hear ! "] He had not elaborated the case as he might have done. He had felt it his duty to put it as shortly, and he hoped as intelligibly, as he possibly could before the House. What he was asking for was not a decision of the House on the claims of these gentlemen, but that they might be referred to the impartial judgment of a Select Committee, and he failed to see why Her Majesty's Government should refuse that. The Government seemed to have made it a Government matter in issuing a Whip of four lines against the Motion. He had always thought there was a lack of the sense of proportion in those who were responsible for Government Whips. A Whip of three lines only was issued on the Necessitous School Boards Bill. That showed the comparative importance which the Government attached to a Measure like that, and the investigation of the conduct of a department of the Government for which they themselves as a Government could not be in any shape or form responsible. [" Hear, hear ! "] The Government had shut the door against anything like inquiry into this question, and had made it a Government matter. There was a passage in Lord Macaulay's Essay on Lord Clive, to the effect that the strength and foundation of British rule in India was that the Sepoy, however humble and poor he might be, felt that under the rule of the Company his bread and salt were assured to him, however long he might live. If that was so with the Indian soldier, should it be less so with the English officer, who had led him in many hard-fought and difficult engagements? [" Hear, hear ! "] That was the view taken in early days under the Honourable East India Company, and now it was found, in contrast to that, that no inquiry could be made into the manner in which the India Office from time to time had treated these men who had served them so well. He could imagine only one thing more damaging to a Government than an accusation that they had treated harshly and unfairly those who had done good service in years past. [" Hear, hear ! "] To such an accusation any Government might be exposed and no harm was done, but when those who had an opportunity of having such an accusation honestly and fairly inquired into turned away from it and endeavoured by all the means at the disposal of a Government to shut the door against inquiry into it, there was only one conclusion likely to be drawn. [" Hear, hear ! "] He felt that this ought never to have been made a Government matter. These gentlemen had a strong and legitimate grievance, as he had shown, and he would, therefore, conclude by moving the Resolution which stood in his name. [" Hear, hear ! "]

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central), in seconding the Resolution, asked for the indulgence of the House if he traversed again some of the ground covered by his hon. Friend; but this grievance of officers in the general list was so intricate in itself, and depended so much on the interpretations of warrants and dispatches that he was bound to trespass on the patience of the House to a certain extent, and to ask for the indulgence hon. Members were always ready to give. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, who dealt with this matter as Under Secretary for India on a former occasion, stated, in opening the case for the Government, that he believed the subject was one which hardly anyone understood, and which no one could solve. He could only say for himself that for years he had studied this question, and the more he studied it, the more difficult and the less clear it seemed. He agreed with his hon. Friend that it was next to impossible to make the subject thoroughly clear to Members of the House except through the medium of a Select Committee. That was why they appealed for a Select Committee. He knew his noble Friend would say that he was quite able to put before the House how they ought to vote on this question, but all he could say to his noble Friend and the House was this—if they could make out a *primâ facie* case for an inquiry, they were entitled to it. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that his hon. Friend had made out such a case. Now, what would his noble Friend say? He would say that he was advised by his Departmental advisers that these gentlemen had no case; but most people who had gone into the facts, as he had conscientiously done, were convinced that they had an excellent case. He thought that that was the interpretation placed on the warrants and dispatches. Of course, he did not blame his noble Friend for the attitude which he assumed. He was more or less at the mercy of his military advisers, but if his noble Friend said that he was only taking the same view which had been taken by every other Secretary of State, he could only reply that that was one more reason why they should come to that House. What was the good of arraigning the officials before the Secretary of State? Why, his noble Friend was their mere mouthpiece in that House. He said, on behalf of those whose cause he advocated, that they were willing to trust the House of Commons, and if it was satisfied, after inquiry, that they had no case, they would abide by that decision. As matters stood, the only appeal they had was to people who had already prejudiced their claims. He had, as he said—and the House would believe him—gone very carefully and honestly into the facts, and he had endeavoured to understand the question, and, looking at it impartially, had come to the conclusion that there was a legitimate claim on the Indian Government. These officers had rendered their services when India was passing through its most critical moments, and now their allowances were not to be granted. The hon. Member proceeded to read a number of extracts from orders and dispatches bearing on the claims of the officers, and urged that the whole circumstances called for investigation. One extract he quoted was the following statement of the Military Secretary, who said:—

> "The General List Officers were appointed to the Indian Army subject to any alterations in the conditions of service which might hereafter be determined on."

He asked hon. Members to mark the wording of that sentence—"the conditions of service which might hereafter be determined on." As his hon. Friend had pointed out, there was not one syllable about "hereafter" in the original. What was said in the dispatch confirming the form of declaration was that they were to be subject to any alteration in the conditions of the Service, meaning, of course, the whole Indian Army, and meaning the alterations then being considered by the Royal Commission sitting on the reorganisation of the Army. In 1858 the exact wording was:—

> "All future appointments of Cadets should be made subject to any alteration that may be decided upon."

Why? Because a Royal Commission was sitting. What alterations were contemplated? Alterations suggested by the Royal Commission. When, therefore, the Cadets agreed to abide by any alterations that might be decided upon, it was quite clear they agreed only to the alterations to be made by the Royal Commission. Yet it was now pretended that this "declaration"—this agreement—not only debarred the General List Officers from the advantages which the General Order of 1864 "assured" and "maintained" to them in common with all officers of the Indian Army, but bound them to accept "any alterations in the conditions of service which might thereafter be determined upon." The words of the General Order of 1864, which was an honest and straightforward document, described the General List Officers as officers who entered the Service on "conditions subject to any change that might be introduced into the Service." It did not say "might or may hereafter be introduced." Such were the weapons which the India Office placed in his noble Friend's hands, and he had no doubt the noble Lord would make the best use of them. He dared say the noble Lord would trot out again the question of expense, but he would undertake to prove, if a Committee were appointed, that the expense would be very small indeed. Of course his noble Friend would produce numerous figures to contradict him, but that, again, would be obvious proof that the House was not the place to decide such a question. It was not across the floor of the House of Commons that the question could be settled. What was wanted was some small independent tribunal. He could not understand why his noble Friend resisted the suggestion made, unless there was something they knew nothing of in the background, and that he could not believe for one moment. There was no doubt his noble Friend did betray great mistrust of the House of Commons, and perhaps he was wise in doing so, because that mistrust was the strongest evidence of the strength of their case. The noble Lord was afraid to let the case go before a Committee, because he knew what the decision of a Committee would be; he knew that justice would be done there. What was the course the noble Lord had pursued? He had not left them free and unfettered to decide this matter, a matter which was purely administrative, and in which Party obligation was in no way at stake. He had seen a good many four-line Whips, but he had never known such a Whip issued in order to enable a Department to avoid a free inquiry. He asked the noble Lord to remember that if it was excellent to have a giant's strength, it was tyranny to use it like a giant. It was unworthy to invoke the aid of a big majority in jockeying 58 poor officers out of their rights. Just as he would refuse to be dictated to on a question like this, he hoped and believed there were many Members of the House who would not listen to the Front Bench, whether it was occupied by Members of this or that Party. Both Front Benches were tarred with the same brush. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton was just as bad as the noble Lord. They all knew that whichever side was in, there was no justice to be got out of a man when once he got on the Front Bench. Let him end as he began. They had not the slightest fear of the House of Commons. They asked for justice. They did not ask hon. Members to pronounce any opinion on the merits of the case. They simply asked to be allowed to go before an impartial tribunal, and not to have their case decided by a packed jury as it were. Before an impartial tribunal he undertook to prove their case up to the hilt. ["Hear, hear!"]

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) said the hon. Member for Horsham had made a very able speech, but he very naturally based it on information supplied to him. He did not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman when he was wrong, indeed, had he done so it would have been necessary to interpolate a correction at every sentence. He thought he would be able to show, in the course of his remarks, that there never was a weaker case put before the House of Commons than the present. But before he dealt with the question of the appointment of a Committee, he desired to say there were certain sentiments enunciated by his hon. Friend with which he entirely agreed. He agreed that the Government were bound to keep faith with those they employed. He further agreed that the Government had no right whatever to wriggle out of an engagement by the ambiguity of the language employed; but after all, the Indian Exchequer and the Indian taxpayer had their rights just as much as anybody else. What was the object of the appointment of a Select Committee? It was to reverse the decision of successive Viceroys, of successive Commanders-in-Chief, of successive Secretaries of State, and of every military and civil member of their respective Councils for the last 16 years. There was an absolutely unbroken record of authority against this case, and it must be remembered that military opinion dominated the Indian Government to a greater degree than it did any other administration in Her Majesty's dominions. It was a matter of notoriety that the arrangements made by the Indian Government in connection with these servants were far more generous and liberal than those sanctioned by this House or the Treasury, and, therefore, a very strong case must be made out before the House would attempt to interfere with the Indian Government, and put upon the Indian revenue a charge which the Indian Government considered an injustice. What was the case which his hon. Friends had presented? It was that these officers had been robbed—the hon. Member for Hull used the word jockeyed—out of their right to Colonels' allowances. But these officers were allowed Colonels' allowances; they were entitled to a certain establishment of Colonels' allowances. The number of Colonels' allowances to which this particular branch of the service was entitled was 13. These officers claimed that they had an unlimited right to Colonels' allowances, but the East India Company in the past and the Queen's Government since had always put a limitation on the number of Colonels' allowances, with one single exception. What had made this case complicated was that a number of facts, wholly extraneous to the case, had been dragged in in order to give colour to it. There were two sets of facts kept entirely distinct. The first related to the reform and reorganisation of the Indian Army after the Mutiny, and the second related to those officers who joined the Indian Army subsequent to the date of the transfer of authority. He thought he would be able to make it clear that both his hon. Friends had been misled in the statements they had made. The Indian Mutiny was a terrible Imperial disaster, but it was largely caused by the defective military organisation of the native army in India. It was, therefore, self-evident that as soon as the Powers of the East India Company were transferred to the Crown, the first duty of the Crown would be thoroughly to reorganise the native army. Great sympathy was felt with the European officers of the Company, many of whom had died at their posts during the Mutiny, and though the rapid rehabilitation of British influence in India was largely due to the skill and valour of others, there was a strong feeling in the House of Commons that when the transference of powers took place the officers of the old Company should not be prejudiced by the change. While the Bill was before Parliament, a Committee was formed for the protection of the interests of these officers, and the Committee entered into various negotiations with the Government for the insertion of words, and ultimately certain words contained in the well known "Henley Clause" were agreed to. Those words were extremely wide, and were such as no Parliament nowadays would assent to. It was laid down that these officers—

> "shall be under the same obligation to serve Her Majesty as they would have been to serve under the said Company, and shall be liable to serve within the same territorial limits only . . . . and be entitled to the like pay, pensions, allowances, and privileges, and the like advantages as regards promotion and otherwise as if they had continued in the service of the said Company."

Those words applied to the old East India Company's officers alone. They were purely retrospective in their action, and a subsequent clause was inserted applying to all the officers who came in afterwards:—

> "It shall be lawful for Her Majesty from time to time, by Order in Council, to alter or regulate the terms and conditions of service under which persons hereafter entering Her Majesty's Indian Forces shall be commissioned."

There were, therefore, two sections in the Act. Under the one came all the old East India Company's officers, and under the other came all those who joined subsequently to 1858. What his hon. Friend wished to do was to transfer the officers under the latter section to the former. If that proposal were assented to, he must say distinctly that it would be a gross breach of faith with the Indian Government, on whom the Henley Clause had placed a tremendous obligation. In the work of reorganising the Indian Army, the Henley Clause was a millstone round the neck of the Indian Government. They could not move in any direction without coming into contact with the guaranteed interests of the old officers. In the old days the Army was organised under a system analogous to that in this country, and promotion was strictly by regimental seniority. To every regiment were attached some 30 officers, on the average; and to every battalion was apportioned one Colonel's allowance and no more. After the Indian Mutiny, half the battalions disappeared. Various Commissions reported in favour of reductions, and the Army was reduced from 250,000 to 120,000 men. An entirely different system of officering was also introduced—the irregular system, first applied to the cavalry and then to the infantry—under which the number of officers attached to a regiment was reduced to less than one-fourth of the old number. And yet the Indian Government had to give to every single officer the same pay, allowances, and promotion, as would have existed if the old system had continued. Commission after Commission was appointed to see that the terms of the Henley Clause was complied with, and concession after concession was made to meet the difficulty. The first of these concessions took the form of the Order read out by the hon. Member, giving Colonels' allowances after 12 years' service as full Lieutenant-Colonel. That Order applied only to the officers of the old East India Company, and was in no sense applicable to the officers whose case was brought forward by his hon. Friend. In 1866, when the present Prime Minister was Secretary of State for India, a further Commission had reported that, notwithstanding all the concessions made, the guarantee clause had not been fulfilled as regarded the colonels' allowances to the old officers, and in despair the Government made a tremendous concession to those officers. In order to have a free hand in future in dealing with all these military problems, on which the security of India depended, it was necessary to buy out all these officers; and the Government allowed them to come into the Staff Corps, and, after 12 years' service as Lieutenant-Colonel, to obtain Colonels' allowances without regard to the number on the list. Now his hon. Friend wished to apply those terms to the officers who had joined subsequently to 1858. Every military authority admitted that from the laxity of wording in the Henley Clause the reorganisation of the Indian Army had cost India millions more than would otherwise have been necessary; and Parliament ought to be very careful before adding to the already heavy non-effective charges of the Indian Army. As to the officers whose case had been brought forward by his hon. Friend, every one of those officers joined subsequently to the termination of the powers of the East India Company.

*MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE: If my right hon. Friend will pardon me, I have the names here of the directors who nominated them.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said that he thought his hon. Friend had fallen into error. What occurred was that the whole of the powers of the Board of Directors ceased, and were transferred to the Secretary of State in Council. But a certain number of the directors were on the Council, where, however, they no longer acted as directors. So careful were the Indian Government, that they put under the Henley Clause all the officers who up to that time had been nominated by the East India Company, but who had not actually joined the Service. His hon. Friend had referred to the Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the terms under which those officers should serve. His hon. Friend must know that that Commission laid down that all these officers came in under the new conditions. It was idle to pretend now that they did not know they were coming in under the new conditions. They went out to India, and were put on the general list; but in 1861, after two years, the reforms in the Indian Army had so far established themselves that certain alternatives of service were offered to these young men. They might join the British regiments, which had been transferred from the Company to the Crown, taking with them the Indian pensions, but having no claim to Colonels' allowances, or they might join the Staff Corps—a service which had been instituted for the purpose of officering regiments on the irregular system. In that corps the promotion was regulated by length of service, and the officers were entitled to Colonels' allowances at the ratio of 1 to 30—the old ratio under the Company. Some of the officers selected the one service and some the other. Between 1861 and 1866 every officer on the general list —all those whose claims were advocated by his hon. Friend—could have joined the Staff Corps; but all did not, because they got better terms by remaining on the general list. When this tremendous concession was made in 1866, officers were requested to join the Staff Corps before a certain day. Having done that, they were entitled, after a certain term of service, to full Colonels' allowances. There were a certain number of officers of the general list and from British regiments who had come in between 1861 and 1866, and the question which the Indian Government had to consider was whether this exceptional privilege should be extended to those officers. For the purposes of uniformity, and to avoid having to deal with men on the same list in different ways, that concession was extended to the limited number of these men then in the Staff Corps. With the exception of this special concession of 1866, the ratio maintained had always been that of 1 to 30. His hon. Friend talked about "robbery." The facts showed how groundless was that charge. Under the Order of 1864 the old rates of pensions were, after 20 years' service, £191, which was raised by the new Order of 1882 to £250; after 24 years' service £292, raised to £365; after 28 years' service, £365, raised to £500; after 32 years' service £456, raised to £700; and after 38 years' service £456, raised to £700. With the fullest desire to do justice he had looked carefully into the matter, and had found an absolutely unbroken record of official opinion against the claims put forward on behalf of these officers. But he was desirous, before coming to a final conclusion, to consult an authority higher than a Committee of the House of Commons—he meant the Military Committee of the Council of India, consisting of Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Archibald Alison, and General Gordon; and he asked them to look into the matter, with the result that they had reported as follows:—

> "There are no grounds for admitting the claim that all the officers of the General Lists of Cavalry and Infantry should receive the Colonel's allowance after 12 years' service as substantive Lieutenant-Colonel. This concession was originally granted in 1862 to officers of the East India Company's Army, whose names were borne on regimental cadres and on the gradation lists of Cavalry and Infantry in the three presidencies, and was subsequently extended in 1866 to all officers of that army and to all officers who joined the Staff Corps on or before the 12th September 1866. The officers of the General Lists were not officers of the Company's Army, and consequently not under the Henley Clause of the Act of 1858, which guaranteed to the latter pay, pension and promotion, 'as if they had continued in the service of the said Company.' The officers of the General Lists were appointed by Her Majesty to Her Majesty's Indian Military Forces after the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown, and the 57th Section of the Act gave Her Majesty full power to frame new regulations as regards pay, promotion, &c., for all these officers. There is no foundation for the statement that, by orders issued subsequent to 1858, the officers of the General Lists acquired the status and privileges of officers of the Company's Army. The General Order of 1864, on which they found their claim, stated that 'to every officer, including the Cadet who entered the service so lately as December 1861, his promotion through every grade, with the pay thereunto belonging, as if the whole native army of India had been kept up, is assured, and his right to Indian pension is maintained." This assurance has been fulfilled. The officers of the General Lists have received their promotion at rates quicker than those previously prevailing, their pay has been improved, and their pensions are considerably higher than the Company's rates. They were given an establishment of 13 Colonels' allowances, that is, at the rate of one to 30 officers, which was the ratio originally fixed for the Staff Corps, and more than this they had no reason to expect. It cannot be maintained that the Order of 1864 gave them a right to a concession granted in 1866 to a different class of officers, in order to remedy a grievance alleged to have arisen from non-fulfilment of the guarantee given by the Henley Clause of 1858, which did not apply to the General Lists."

It was said that this was a small matter—that there were only a few officers concerned; but if the House appointed a Committee to investigate the conditions under which those officers had enlisted, they would have to inquire into the cases not only of those on the effective list, but of those who had retired from the effective list in the belief that the decisions of the Secretary of State were final. He would ask, Would this claim be granted if it were to apply to English revenue? ["Hear, hear!"] It seemed to him it was a claim that the House could not possibly assent to. At the present moment there was great sympathy with the Indian Government, and proposals had been made from both sides of the House that assistance should be given to the Indian Exchequer to enable them to tide over the temporary difficulties against which they were now contending. He did not think that they needed that assistance. He believed the Indian Government would manage to struggle on, provided they got fair play and were protected from Motions of this kind, which he was sure would not be moved if they were to apply to the English taxpayer. ["Hear, hear!"] He undertook that there should be a complete fulfilment of any contract or engagement made by the Indian Government in regard to these officers, and he would take care that the Indian Government did not get the advantage of any ambiguity of phraseology in those contracts or engagements. Therefore he thought he had the right to ask the House to protect the Indian Government from this Motion, which he should characterise as one of the most unjustifiable raids ever made upon the Indian Exchequer.

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that as, like his noble Friend, he had served for some years in the Army, as he had been Under Secretary for India in 1866, when the Commission was appointed, and as his service in India had given him considerable knowledge of the position and claims of the officers in question, he desired to say a few words on the Motion before the House. No doubt upon the Paper circulated those officers had a certain case; but the statements made in those Papers must be read with their context. He thought the Seconder of the Motion had put his case on too high a ground. It was not necessary to accuse the Members of the Government and the successive officials who had borne the responsibility of administering the affairs of India, of having robbed these officers. Strong expressions of that kind were only resorted to when there was a weak case. To say that when men obtained places on the Treasury Bench they lost all sense of right and wrong was ridiculous. At any rate, he, having sat on the Treasury Bench, had not been sensible of having had any such loss. He, for his part, thought that the officers of the Old East India Company were treated with great liberality. If any error had been committed at all, it was an error of liberality. If the letter of the law held out the promise of expectation to those officers that they would be entitled to the succession of Colonels' allowances when they had reached thirty-eight years' service, they ought to have those allowances. He could not get over the fact, admitted by these officers themselves, that they had agreed that their appointments were to be subject to any alteration that might be decided on. His hon. Friends who moved and seconded the Motion said that that did not cover the alterations in the conditions of pay and service generally. That was as great an assumption on the one side as on the other. He had looked into this question as long ago as 1866, and he thought then, as he had thought ever since, that it left the Government of India free to make such conditions for these officers' services, after they had organised the service of the Army, as seemed proper to them. He did not think a *primâ facie* case had been made out for an inquiry by Select Committee, and a Select Committee of that House ought not to be appointed unless such a *primâ facie* case were made out. ["Hear, hear!"]

*GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham) said a good many of his constituents believed that a grievance existed. These officers did not wish to have their case prejudged; what they wished was to put the matter before an impartial tribunal. The noble Lord seemed to have jumped to the conclusion that this Committee was going to report against him, and talked about the burden which would be cast on the finances of India. The whole question appeared to him to be a very difficult and complicated one, and he did not intend to enter into it, but what he did contend was that these officers were entitled to have their case examined by an impartial and entirely unbiassed tribunal. ["Hear, hear!"] Secretaries of State for India had always taken advice and been coached by officers of a rival corps—the Staff Corps. They all knew that rivalries and jealousies existed in all Services—in the Army, the Navy, and even, he was told, in the Church. These unfortunate officers could control no votes, but they had passed their lives in India, and served their country gallantly, and therefore he hoped that hon. Members would vote for this impartial inquiry by a Committee of the House.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he felt bound to intervene on two grounds. He wished to express his entire approval of the policy which was being pursued by the noble Lord, as well as his admiration for the masterly speech which he had addressed to the House on that occasion. ["Hear, hear!"] He must also say a word or two on the speech of the hon. Member for Hull, who seconded this Motion. He did not think that speech ought to pass unnoticed. He had always demurred in that House to reflections being made on the Government of India, especially when they were groundless. In this country we understood the criticisms which opposing political parties passed upon each other, and upon Ministers with reference to party politics. But when a responsible Member of that House, and especially a Member occupying the position relating to India which the Member for Hull did, distinctly told the House of Commons and the people of this country that the Government of India, as represented in that House by those Ministers whom Her Majesty had been pleased to appoint Secretary of State for India were absolutely devoid of impartiality, that they prejudged every case that came before them, that they were entirely in the hands of their military officials, that if they objected to an inquiry there was something in the background, and that they had jockeyed officers out of their just claims, he could only say that that long catalogue of charges against responsible Ministers in that House was one which he was not anxious to see reprinted in the Press of India. He felt that it was his duty to enter a strong protest against applying that language to the present Government or to their predecessors, or to the Government of the Viceroy in India, or to the Indian Council in Whitehall—["hear, hear!"]—for they were all involved in the sweeping criticisms of the hon. Member.

Sir H. SEYMOUR KING said he did not intend to convey anything of the kind. He had listened with utter amazement to the right hon. Gentleman. On the contrary, he had said that the right hon. Gentleman and his noble Friend had come to a decision which they believed to be perfectly accurate. He himself, however, honestly took the view that the matter should be submitted to an impartial tribunal.

*Sir H. FOWLER said he was quite willing to believe that his hon. Friend did not intend to convey what he said, but he had quoted verbatim the words which had been used. He demurred altogether to the statement that this matter had been prejudged. He believed it had been investigated by five Secretaries of State—the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Kimberley, Lord Cross, the noble Lord opposite, and himself. The hon. Member stated that he approached this question with impartiality, and with a conscientious desire to do his duty. Did the hon. Member suppose that Secretaries of State were incapable of impartiality, or were devoid of conscience or regard for duty? He did not think the hon. Member meant that, but unfortunately he implied it, and he, therefore, wished to enter his protest. After the clear statement of the noble Lord, he was not going into the merits; he would only recall to the House what was the crux of the situation. The same advantages were asked for by officers who had joined the service after the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown, as was granted by the Act of 1858 to the old East Indian Army by the East Indian Government. The hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down said that there was a rivalry between the Staff Corps and other branches of the service, but these gentlemen got all that the Staff Corps got, and were put in precisely the same position. He disagreed totally with the construction which had been put upon the dispatch of 1864, but the real point on which the controversy rested was whether these officers were entitled under that dispatch to what, with all respect to the present Prime Minister, he would venture to call the disastrous concession subsequently made in 1866, by which Colonels' allowances were given to the whole of the officers who were in the old East India Company's service. His opinion was that if the Indian Government had been disposed to press the point they might have been able to deprive the officers on the General List of any Colonels' allowances, but they had been given an establishment of 13. So far as his knowledge extended, he considered the Indian Government had treated their servants with the amplest generosity, and he thought they were treated with special liberality in 1882. There had been, he might almost say, a dozen inquiries, and the matter had been fully and carefully considered, and if the House appointed a Select Committee to inquire further into it, it would avowedly be a declaration of opinion on the part of the House that injustice had been done, and that the case had not been properly investigated. In the event of the Committee reporting in favour of granting these allowances, the House would find itself in a difficult position, for the Government of India was the sole judge of the charges that were to be imposed on the revenues of India. The Secretary of State had but one vote in the Council, and that House had by Standing Orders adapted to the case of East Indian expenditure the same rule as existed with reference to Imperial expenditure—namely, that no proposal could be made for any charge upon the revenues of this country or of India unless it was previously recommended by the Crown—in other words, by the Government of the day. He thought that groundless charges had been made against the Government of India with reference to their expenditure; but it would be a very heavy additional charge if this application was granted, for the noble Lord was quite right in saying that they would have to open the case of every man who had retired and taken a pension. He thought it would be a serious thing if the House of Commons, in spite of the deliberate opinion of the Viceroy and his Council, in spite of the deliberate opinion of five or six Secretaries of State and their Councils, recommended a charge on the revenues of India which every one of those authorities thought ought not to be put upon them, and a burden they should not be called upon to bear. As far as the military question was concerned, surely the hon. Member would not impute to three such distinguished officers as Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Archibald Alison, and General Gordon any jealous rivalries, or a desire to do injustice to any part of the military service. They would be the first to recognise even shadowy claims, if they rested on justice. In the face of their advice, not only to the Secretary of State, but to the Government of the day, and with all respect to the House of Commons, he thought it would be an unwise thing for the House to take a step indicating a desire to reverse the policy which had been pursued, and implying that the Government, both in India and at home, had been influenced by improper motives, or had prejudiced the case, had not acted impartially, and had not done what he himself knew they intended to do, and what the Secretary for India, speaking quite as much for the Opposition side of the House as for his own, said that the Government would always do—whatever was fair and just to the distinguished men who, whether in a civil or military capacity, had served the Crown in the Government of India. [*Cheers.*]

The House divided:—Ayes, 55; Noes, 174.—(Division List, No. 187.)

IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN MANUFACTURED GOODS.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) rose to call attention to the great increase in the importation of foreign manufactured goods into the United Kingdom, and the consequent loss of employment to the working classes in Great Britain and Ireland; and to move:—

> "That fully manufactured goods brought into this country from any foreign country should pay a toll for the benefit of the British labour thereby displaced of Ten pounds per centum ad valorem, and partly manufactured goods a Customs toll of half that amount, and that the proceeds should be applied in forming the nucleus of a national fund for the granting of weekly pensions to deserving and necessitous persons over 65 pears of age incapacitated from earning a livelihood by sickness or infirmity, or otherwise utilised for the benefit of British trade and labour."

The hon. Member said the Motion which stood in his name appeared very formidable upon the Paper. It was, however, extremely simple. He laid it before the House not only as representing a manufacturing constituency, but also in the hope of applying a solution to the difficult problem of how to provide old age pensions for the industrial classes—a problem in which the whole Unionist Party was interested. To show that the Motion was not framed in the selfish interest of the manufacturing or artisan class, it would be seconded by his hon. Friend the Member for West Wilts, who represented a purely agricultural constituency. It was not necessary that he should say more by way of introduction. But if the House would permit him he would make good the preamble of the Resolution. To do so he would have to transgress the sound unwritten rule as to the avoidance of statistics. But he hoped for the kind indulgence of hon. Members, as in no other way could the point in issue be proved. Material of an authentic character was fortunately not lacking. There were first of all the Returns moved for by his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade in 1882, when a private Member inclined to protection; upon Foreign Trade, Revenue, etc., between 1854 and 1880, and which were known generally as Mr. Ritchie's Returns; and then the Tables of British Trade and Production between 1854 and 1895, presented last year; and then the very able memorandum of February last of Sir Courtenay Boyle to the President of the Board of Trade. He was bound to acknowledge the general fairness of the Reports and Tables furnished by Sir Courtenay Boyle and Sir R. Giffen. One saw them driven by force of fact into admissions which they vainly tried to explain away. He would confine himself as strictly as possible to proving what the Resolution truly called "the great increase in the importation of foreign manufactured goods." The Secretary to the Board of Trade said, p. 18:—

> "The import of articles called manufactured into the United Kingdom has enormously increased, viz., from £53,000,000 in 1883 to £81,000,000 in 1896."

No one could say in the face of such figures that Lord Rosebery was exaggerating when he said last year, "these are grave and striking facts." But they became much more grave if one looked further back still, as one was assuredly entitled to do, namely, to the commencement of the time when this country, once the workshop of the world, began to become the dumping ground for the surplus products of foreign states—often sold under cost price, thanks to foreign bounties and duties. The total importation of manufactured goods in 1855 was only just over £9,000,000. Since then it had gone up year after year, until now it was nine times that amount. Indeed, this was below the mark, for the Trade and Navigation Returns for the 12 months ending March 31 showed not only that £82,348,337 worth of manufactured articles were imported, but also £15,148,000 worth of miscellaneous articles, mostly manufactured, and one million worth through the Parcel Post—not far short, therefore, of 100 millions worth, or tenfold the importation of manufactures 40 years ago. Whence, then, came this greatly increased competition? Sir Courtenay Boyle said:—

> "Our imports from France have increased sensibly, notwithstanding its slow increase of population, and the increase on analysis is found to be largely an increase of the imports of silk and woollen manufactures. Our exports to France, on the other hand, show a sensible decline."

Then as to Germany. The Secretary to the Board of Trade said, p. 27:—

> "It is evident that the Returns relating to imports from Germany do not tell us the whole story of our trade with that country. It is impossible, therefore, to make up anything like an exact account of the real progress of our imports from Germany."

He explained this on page 13, when he said,

> "A not inconsiderable amount of our import trade with Germany is carried on through Dutch and Belgian ports, and appears in our official Returns as imports from Holland or Belgium."

The hon. Member was afraid that the President of the Board of Trade, in trying recently to reassure the Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce as to German competition, had quite forgotten this caution from the Permanent Secretary of his Department. The only fair thing then was to consider the imports from Germany, Holland, and Belgium as a whole, and for brevity's sake they might well include France. The total average annual importation from Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France, was in the quinquennial period 1855-59 but £34,000,000, while in 1895 it was £120,000,000, an increase of £86,000,000, while our export to those four countries only rose in the same period from £25,000,000 to £49,000,000, an increase of but £24,000,000. The House would recollect the passage he had just quoted from the latest Board of Trade memorandum, as to the increase of manufactured imports from France, and the difficulty of precision as to Germany. Sir Courtenay Boyle said, however, "There is a distinct increase in our imports from Germany," and it was necessary to read this, not only by the light of every man's visual experience, and by the candid statements of Mr. Williams' striking book, entitled "Made in Germany," which everyone should read, but also by the official table, that the exports of manufactured articles from Germany had risen from

£83,000,000 in 1880 to £109,000,000 in 1895. In the latter year, moreover, France exported £76,000,000 worth of manufactured goods, and the United States £38,000,000 worth, or nearly double the export of 15 years before, and the greater part came here, to this the only free market. The main lines of the imports of manufactures into this country were soon stated. In 1896 we imported £3,500,000 worth of cotton manufactures, £2,740,000 worth of glass manufactures, £4,500,000 worth of iron manufactures, £7,500,000 worth of leather manufactures, besides nearly £3,000,000 worth of boots, shoes, and gloves, £3,000,000 worth of paper, £16,700,000 worth of silk manufactures (or a third more than the whole export of British and Irish produce to France in 1895, on which we paid nearly 40,000,000 francs of duty), £12,500,000 worth of woollen manufactures, £1,500,000 worth of watches and clocks. In all, £57,500,000 worth of principal manufactured articles, and £23,500,000 worth of other articles. In face of such facts as these, with an increase of some twelve millions in the population since 1855, to provide with wages for food, it was evident that there had been, as the Resolution declared, a displacement of British and Irish labour. If these articles were required for consumption in this country, the making of them in the United Kingdom would have given increased employment to tens of thousands of our own countrymen. We exported in 1896 £208,000,000 worth of articles manufactured or partly manufactured, compared to £231,000,000 worth in 1872, and nearly £215,000,000 worth in 1882, when the population was five millions less. He might be pardoned perhaps for referring particularly to the staple industry of Sheffield—hardware and cutlery. In 1857 we exported £4,000,000 worth of hardware and cutlery, and in 1895 only £1,800,000 worth. Although there had been a slight increase in 1896, surely this decline showed there was something wrong. The latest conclusions and statistics of the Board of Trade would have amply justified this Motion being brought forward, even if his duty to his constituents had not necessitated it. Sir Courtenay Boyle said of Germany and the United States, that

> "they are travelling upwards more rapidly than we—that they, and, to some extent, France also, are certain to increase their rate of upward movement, and their competition with us in neutral markets, and even in our home markets, will become increasingly serious. Every year will add to their required capital and skill, and they will have larger and larger additions to their population to draw upon."

The recent memorandum went on to say:

> "It is necessary more than ever that attention should be given in the United Kingdom to the business of manufacturing for export. The change of conditions must be recognised, and we can scarcely expect to maintain our past undoubted pre-eminence without strenuous effort. The question is one which interests consumers as well as producers, labour as well as capital."

The proposition he submitted was that this wholesale importation of foreign manufactures or the products of foreign labour was never dreamt of by Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton the respected Father of this House, when they prevailed on Parliament to open the British market to all the world, without tax or toll. No nation had followed that example, notwithstanding positive assurances to the contrary. Only that afternoon the Secretary of State for the Colonies talked about the Free Trade system of this country. There was no Free Trade system in this country. The system they had was one of free imports without reciprocity, without that interchange which was the very basis of trade. "Free Trade" was an absolute misnomer as applied to their present fiscal system. What they then said, with the Secretary of the Board of Trade, was, "the change of conditions must be recognised." The State should therefore charge a toll for the use of the British market in the same way that every municipal or market owner in the country did on the produce entering it, and that this sum should be applied for the benefit of the working and industrial classes. It was these classes who suffered. Capital knew no frontier, but labour, saddled with family ties and burdens, must stay at home. He readily admitted that a portion of the manufactured imports were really raw materials for manufacturing processes in this country. These partly manufactured goods, or imports, giving some employment to British labour, being placed on the market for sale, should, in his opinion, pay a lower toll than fully manufactured goods imported ready for immediate sale and employing no English labour. He would only detain the House a few minutes more in a brief examination of the amount such a toll might place in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of how he might use it for the benefit of the working and industrial classes. The later Returns did not discriminate between fully manufactured and partly manufactured imports—why he could not conceive. But assuming their proportion to be much the same as formerly, about one-fourth of the whole would be partly manufactured. Let him put the partly manufactured at three-eighths of the whole, and take the manufactured imports at only £80,000,000 instead of £100,000,000, as they would be found to be under a stricter Customs system. A 10 per cent. toll on £50,000,000 worth of fully manufactured imports would yield £5,000,000, and 5 per cent. on £30,000,000 of partly manufactured imports would yield £1,500,000 a year, or together £6,500,000. From the Returns moved for in 1891 by the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), it would appear that in round numbers 245,000 persons—88,000 males and 157,000 females—over 65 years of age were in receipt of permanent poor law relief, and of these about one-third were ending their days in the workhouse. Double those figures and they had 500,000 persons out of the 1,800,000 over 65 years of age in the country who could establish a claim to pension as being necessitous. This £6,500,000 would give 5s. a week to every one of these 500,000 persons. But even less than one-third of the amount—namely, £2,000,000 would give 5s. a week to over 150,000 persons, or all the women over 65 now upon the rates, leaving in such case £4,500,000 to be applied to other purposes. It might be objected that the income would be fluctuating and of uncertain amount. But if in one year it was less than another, it was certain that the prosperity and employment in the country would be greater, and the demand on the fund less. Compared to the great gain of such grants and the aid they would afford to the rates, the toll would not be felt in the least. Indeed, as our exporters to the United States, France, and other countries nearly always had to deliver their goods duty free, taking the duties off their profits and the wages of their workmen, the foreigner would probably pay it all. In any case, as our Customs Revenue was over £21,000,000 a year, very little less than in 1845, despite boasted free trade, and larger than that of any other country in Europe, this small addition would be felt by no one, home competition would prevent any advance in price. The Resolution favoured British possessions, and, if there was one thing more satisfactory than another in Sir Courtenay Boyle's Report, it was the admission of the Board of Trade that

> "the greater proportion of the trade in British possessions everywhere is carried on with the United Kingdom."

["Hear, hear!"] The important step just taken in this direction by the Dominion of Canada—[*cheers*]—could not fail not only to be very gratefully received in this country, but also to contribute very materially to the development of trade within the Empire. ["Hear, hear!"] This would assist them more than anything else, he believed, to meet the fierce competition with which they were assailed in markets throughout the world. The Leader of the House would doubtless recollect having once said that it might be desirable to bring foreign nations to a better frame of mind by taxing their manufactures. He submitted that this was an opportunity for bringing them to that better frame of mind, and that in doing it they would confer a signal benefit upon the working and industrial classes of the country. It was absolutely incumbent upon them—and he said it as the representative of a working class and manufacturing constituency, and as knowing something of the feelings of working men in all parts of the country—to do something at the present time to defend the home market. If he were told that retaliation was to be feared, he replied, Was it possible for any foreign country to raise their duties against us higher than they were now? Every country on the face of the earth had done or was doing everything it possibly could to injure British trade, and really the best way, as Lord Salisbury himself had said, to obtain better terms from foreign countries was to show that we were not fast wedded to any system, but that we would meet increased duties by higher duties here; that, in short, we would trade with those who trade with us. He begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

*Captain CHALONER (Wilts, Westbury), in seconding the Resolution, observed that he represented a constituency which had suffered by unfair competition from foreign countries. The town of Trowbridge at one time took the lead in the cloth trade industry of the West of England, whereas now, whenever he went there, he had nothing to deplore but empty mills, distressed industry, and hands loafing about the street corners, unable to obtain work. He submitted that every thousand pounds sent abroad necessarily meant that the money was spent in employing foreign labour, whilst the circulation of it was taken away from this country, and consequently led to the employment of a smaller number of English hands. Why was it we were unable to remedy those evils, which not even Free Traders would deny? It was because we went into the fight with our hands tied and unarmed. We endeavoured to compete with foreign nations whilst we had no weapon to use against them, they being armed with all the tariffs directed against our goods. What would be the results if the Resolution were accepted? It must mean either reciprocity of trade with foreign Powers by making them come to terms, or else it would mean imposing a tariff upon their goods, with one or other of two effects—either to keep out their manufactured goods altogether, in which case there would be an enormous increase in the number of men employed in this country and increased prosperity, or else, if they accepted the tariff and still imported their goods, it would mean that in using our "shop" they would be paying for the use of it. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed the acceptance of the Resolution also would help the Government to redeem many pledges they made previous to the election by doing something in the direction of affording old-age pensions for the benefit of the working classes displaced by the present unfair competition.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): My hon. Friends have spoken in defence of the Resolution with great ability and with evident conviction, and they have taken the view that it is in the interests of the working classes and of the manufacturers, and I gather, also in the interests of the agriculture of this country, that some such Resolution should be recorded in our journals and acted upon by the Government of the day. I confess it was with a certain amount of surprise that I heard my hon. and gallant Friend who seconded the Resolution take the view that this Resolution is a Resolution in favour of agriculture. I can imagine a form of protection, a duty upon foreign imports, which would undoubtedly be an advantage to the classes engaged in the production of imported articles into this country. I have no doubt that those engaged in growing wheat and barley would gain by a duty on the importation of wheat and barley; but what I confess I wholly fail to see is how a duty on the articles consumed, among others by the classes engaged in agriculture, could benefit those classes when no corresponding duty is placed on those articles which the agricultural classes themselves produce. [*Opposition cheers.*] How it could be an advantage to my hon. Friend's constituents that they should pay more for all the articles they import from foreign countries, while they have no advantage in the things they produce in the home market, I confess passes my ingenuity to conceive. [*Opposition cheers.*] The truth is that this Resolution is advanced by the Mover of it on the ground that it is not for the benefit of the agricultural interest, but for the benefit of the great manufacturing interest of the country; and it is from that point of view I will say a few words. My hon. Friend has lamented that England no longer maintains its relative position among the manufacturing communities of the world and he brought forward statistics of undoubted authenticity to prove the fact. The fact is an undeniable one. Most unquestionably two or three generations ago England stood in solitary grandeur, so to speak, as the great manufacturing country, and now it sees other countries following its steps, and in their turn learning the lesson we have ourselves learnt in the past. I do not deny that in some respects and from some points of view this new condition of things is of the nature of a national danger, and that the facts to which my hon. Friend calls attention deserves most careful watching by those responsible for the conduct of our affairs. But do not let the House take the view that it is a pure and absolute loss, as my hon. Friend supposes, either that other countries should manufacture or that we should import. [*Cheers.*] It is an advantage to us that we should be able to import goods, and my hon. Friend's ideal, to which he appears to point, is that the nation which imports nothing but raw material and pays for it in manufactured goods is really not the ideal to which we should look as giving the greatest development to our own manufactures. Now, my hon. Friend compares exports and imports in his statement; but the two things are corelative. You cannot import unless you pay for the goods, and you can only pay for your imports by your exports. [*Cheers.*] [Mr. JAMES LOWTHER interrupted with a remark which could not be heard in the Reporters' Gallery.] My right hon. Friend says that we are £200,000,000 short. Let it be what you please, what my right hon. Friend means is that what in the old-fashioned discussion was called the balance of trade is against us, and we import more than we export. How does that come about? It comes about, as every one knows, largely from the fact that we are great creditors of other nations. They have to pay their debts to us, and they cannot pay in specie. International trade is a question of barter, and their debts to us are paid in goods. That is a fact which accounts for the fact to which my right hon. Friend has just called attention. If it were not so there would be an accumulating balance of unpaid debts against us, an accumulation of indebtedness which would rapidly bring us to the verge of bankruptcy. I therefore assume that the debts between the foreigners and this country are roughly balanced in the course of each year, and if that is so, you cannot expect to increase your exports, as my right hon. Friend rightly desires to increase them, without at the same time increasing those imports for which the exports are in effect the payment. The truth is, speaking for myself, I am not afraid of imports into this country. What I am afraid of is the competition in neutral markets between the manufactures of this country and the manufactures of other countries. [*Cheers.*] I think that if my hon. Friend will give full consideration to that aspect of the question, he will probably see that the best way of bringing our manufactures up to the standard at which they can compete effectively in the neutral markets is not to surround or swaddle them in protective tariffs. [*Opposition cheers.*] These observations are restricted to the neutral markets. If we are to compete with Germany, France, or America, or any other nation in neutral markets, the way to produce that most desirable result is not to do anything which would take off the competitive strain, without which very little good is done in the world, either in the realm of manufactures or in any other region of human endeavour. Let me say in passing, that there was one point of my hon. Friend's speech which I did not quite follow. He told us that no rise in prices would, in his judgment, follow from the imposition of protective duties. If no rise in price is to ensue from protective duties, it seems hard at first sight to see how manufacturers in this country are to profit by the imposition of the duty. The reason our manufacturers naturally desire that there should be a protective duty is that the price should rise. That is their object, and if that object does not succeed, then one of the main instruments by which my hon. Friend proposes to improve their position would lose all its efficiency. One other point occurs to me in connection with what fell from both speakers. They have stated that the imposition of the duties would produce prosperity, diminish the number of unemployed, and prevent strikes. I profoundly distrust most arguments on economic subjects drawn from what is crudely but inaccurately described as experience. I think it is worth my hon. Friend's consideration whether in the countries which have adopted the system he advocates there are fewer unemployed, fewer strikes, or a greater amount of prosperity. I confess that the indications I have obtained on the subject do not lead me to accept this as a fact, though I do not say that it should not be taken into account. There would be a certain absurdity in the House adopting at the present time a Resolution for fostering manufactures, when, broadly speaking, our manufactures are in a specially flourishing condition—["No!"]—and not in adopting a Resolution at the same time dealing with others which are not in a flourishing condition. If we are to

First Lord of the Treasury.

tamper with our traditional fiscal system it ought to be, I should think, in the direction of protecting that which is obviously not flourishing, rather than in the direction of protecting that which is flourishing. While I see all these difficulties in the way of my hon. Friend's contention, and these defects in the reasoning and the arguments, do not let it be supposed that I think our present fiscal system is one wholly without its own difficulties and dangers. I believe my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has given expression to this view before. I think that the very small taxable area with which we now have to deal is a chronic difficulty, or may be a chronic difficulty in certain very easily foreseen contingencies, which would make the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer an extremely embarrassing one; and, while much is to be said for the extreme simplicity of our fiscal system, it has its own difficulties and dangers which it would be folly of the House to ignore. We have gained greatly by the simplification of the system. Let us remember that while we have gained we have put ourselves in a difficult and delicate position, and that we shall find it hard to raise new revenue if new revenue is required; and it is possible that some modification of the existing system may from that point of view at no distant date be absolutely necessary. The second weakness in our present fiscal system is one to which my hon. Friend referred, and in respect of which he quoted an election answer which I gave to an election question in 1892. To the terms of that answer I absolutely adhere. I have always felt, and I now feel, that we have, one after another, deprived ourselves of every weapon by which we may negotiate with foreign Powers in regard to that matter. I regret that, as a person who thinks that immense advantage can be derived by this country from the system of free trade, because it is evident that by negotiations we were enabled in times past, if not to break down altogether, at all events to modify in our favour those hostile tariffs which foreign nations raised against us. [Mr. Mundella made an observation which could not be heard in the Gallery.] The right hon. Gentleman is a Member of the Cobden Club, and is necessarily a great admirer of Cobden. I do not say that under the commercial treaty with France, which was Cobden's work, there was anything really given up by this country, but I do say that the possibility of giving it up—in other words, the possibility of modifying our tariff to suit the tariff of France did obtain from France modifications of her tariff in our favour from which we derived some benefit. ["Hear, hear!"] But that process cannot go on now, because now we have nothing to negotiate with. [Mr. Mundella: "It was wine mainly that was the weapon;" *and several* hon. Members: "Silk!"] The right hon. Member makes all the concession I desire. He has admitted that the power of this country to manipulate its tariffs is a weapon that can be used in negotiations with foreign countries. But I say that now it is scarcely possible—I do not say absolutely impossible—for us to find any further modification which may be used for that diplomatic purpose. When I said in the answer which my hon. Friend has quoted that I could conceive circumstances in which it would be necessary for us to take up as a diplomatic weapon, a diplomatic threat, some form of fiscal charge upon foreign manufactures, I only said what every wise man would say did not go beyond what might be the commercial necessities of this country. Of course, I grant that that is practically an act of fiscal warfare, and fiscal warfare, like every other warfare, is a very costly operation. But war is an operation which, however costly, nations must sometimes engage in, and I can conceive circumstances in which we should be perfectly justified in undergoing the cost and risk which must inevitably accompany any such diplomatic contest as that to which I refer. I have now, I think, covered all the ground of the Resolution excepting the latter part of it dealing with old age pensions. On that subject it would be obviously premature for me to say anything. We have always entertained the hope that something substantial might be done by this House of Commons in aid of the deserving poor—["hear, hear!"]—and when that is done no doubt it will throw upon those who are responsible for the finances of this country the necessity of finding means whereby to meet any charge that may, as a consequence of such a plan, be imposed upon our finances. But as it would be premature and inexpedient for me to say one word either with regard to the suggested plan of aiding the aged poor or with regard to the financial methods by which the plan could be carried out, I hope my hon. Friend will feel that I am not discourteous to him if I put aside that portion of the Resolution. I do not think that this discussion has been without advantage, but I am not of opinion that much would be gained by asking the House to go to a division upon the Resolution. I could not support it, and the Government could not support it. I hope that in the circumstances my hon. Friend will be content with the opportunity which has been given him of so ably expressing the views which he has long held and strenuously supported, and that now that the discussion has run its course he will not require the House to divide. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. J. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said that he took great interest in this question, because he represented a constituency where trade had been materially affected by the force of foreign competition. The increasing importation of manufactured goods was such as must cause everyone considerable uneasiness. In his constituency he saw every day the evil results of the pressure of foreign competition. The cheap boot trade, for example, was one class of industry which had been entirely driven out by the stress of Belgian competition. That meant that numbers of men were forced to seek employment as casual labourers at the docks and elsewhere. They swelled the ranks of the unemployed. In the very heart of his constituency there were foreign depôts and American depôts competing with English manufacturers on their own ground. Surely it would not be unfair to make foreigners pay some toll for the privilege which was extended to them? In New South Wales, a Free Trade Colony, a charge in the shape of a tax on profits was imposed upon foreign manufactured goods sold in the Colony. The income tax of this country was being paid more and more by mere agents, by shopkeepers, buyers and sellers of goods. When they saw one native industry after another falling away, it was high time to take this subject into serious consideration. He was a disciple of the hon. Member for Sheffield, having been converted to his views by hard facts. He felt sure that the spread of education was opening the eyes of the people. They were beginning to realise where the shoe pinched, and it would not be very long before constituencies like his own would ask that some sort of protection should be given to their industries.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT said that, after the declaration of the Leader of the House, that the question of old age pensions would receive careful consideration, and after the opportunity which he had had of giving the Chancellor of the Exchequer a hint as to the source whence the right hon. Gentleman might obtain the necessary funds, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion put, and negatived.

PIERS AND HARBOURS.

*MR. EDWIN LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro) had given notice of the following Motion:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, in the interests of trade and communication by sea between places on the coasts of England and Wales, and with a view to the protection and development of sea fisheries and the safety of the persons engaged in them, it is desirable that a Departmental Committee be appointed to inquire in what way and to what extent the existing provisions of piers and harbours on those coasts should be improved."

He said that the subject to which his Motion referred had occupied the attention of the House on many occasions in the last 20 years. In 1884 a Committee recommended, after a most exhaustive inquiry, the provision of more piers and harbours of refuge, in the interests, chiefly, of the fishermen of this country. He knew that the Members of the Government responsible for the spending departments would call attention to the Treasury Minute of 1861, by which it was laid down that money might be advanced for this purpose by way of loan; but what was the use of loans to poor fishermen who could not raise the interest and had no security to give? ["Hear, hear!"] This was not a small matter. It concerned a very large number of fishermen on the coasts, and if the fishermen had the power of combining, or could exercise the power of the vote, it would be impossible for any Government long to resist their just demands.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present:—

The House was Adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Eight of the Clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 28th April 1897.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY (WALES) BILL.

On the consideration of this Bill,

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said that he did not intend to oppose the Bill, but he desired to say that last year a similar Bill had been opposed by the Welsh Members on the ground that it authorised the imposition of special railway rates which applied more particularly to the Carnarvon branch of the line. The present Measure, however, had been so altered that it applied only to the County of Flint, and he believed that another Bill dealing with the other Welsh counties would be introduced subsequently. In consequence of the alteration that had been made in the Measure, he no longer desired to oppose it. He thought that it was desirable that he should make this statement in explanation of his action in withdrawing his opposition to the Measure.

Bill, as amended, considered; to be Read the Third time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SERVICE FRANCHISE BILL.

MR. HARRY MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) moved "That this Bill be now Read a Second time." He said that probably it would be for the convenience of the House that he should state the circumstances which had induced the promoters of the Measure to bring it forward. The object of the Bill was to prevent a large number of deserving persons from being deprived of the Parliamentary franchise which they had hitherto enjoyed under the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1884, in consequence of the interpretation which had been placed upon that Act by a Judgment of the Court of Appeal, pronounced at the end of 1896. The effect of that judgment would be that at the next registration of the Parliamentary voters in September, nearly the whole of the police, and thousands of shop assistants and other persons who resided upon the premises of their employers, would be deprived of the franchise. Down to the end of 1896 such persons were generally regarded as being entitled to the franchise by virtue of their service residence, but by the Judgment of the Court of Appeal it was held that policemen occupying cubicles in police barracks were not entitled to the franchise, on the ground that the partitions separating the cubicles did not reach the ceiling, that the cubicles were lighted by electric lights which lighted two or more of them, and that they were heated by a general system of hot-water pipes. That decision had been held to apply to the cases of shop assistants and other persons occupying similar cubicles. The effect of the Judgment of the Court of Appeal would be to enable large employers of labour to confer upon or to withhold the franchise from those in their employment by means of architectural devices. [**"Hear, hear!"**] Lord Justice Rigby, who differed from the majority of the Court of Appeal, in the case of "Clutterbuck *v.* Taylor," in the course of his Judgment said:—

> "The question raised is, whether the appellant was an inhabitant occupier of a dwelling-house within the meaning of Section 3 of the Representation of the People Act 1884. He was, as I understood the statement made in the case, allowed, as a matter of fact, to occupy the cubicle during the whole of the qualifying period without interference. He had the key of the cubicle; and I gather that, when he was on night duty, he did in fact use it for sleeping in during the day; and, when he was on day duty, he used it for sleeping in at night. He used it, therefore, for sleeping in as occasion required; and it appears also that he was in fact allowed to take meals in it if he liked. Section 3 of the Representation of the People Act 1884 says that 'where a man himself inhabits any dwelling-house by virtue of any office, service, or employment he shall be deemed, for the purposes of this Act, to be an inhabitant occupier of such dwelling-house as a tenant.' In this case it cannot be said that the cubicle was inhabited by any superior under whom the appellant served. Assuming for the moment that the

cubicle was a 'dwelling-house' for the purposes of the Act, it appears to me that the appellant was an inhabitant occupier during the qualifying period. I cannot see that the existence of a power in the Chief Constable to make regulations or restrictions with regard to the use of the dwelling-house by the appellant has anything to do with the franchise given by the section, provided that he did in fact inhabit. The section says nothing about the nature of the inhabitancy, or as to how far it may or may not be subject to restrictions; and I think we ought to be very slow to insert limitations which the Legislature has not expressly mentioned. There are, we know, cases of large establishments where a great number of persons are employed, who inhabit parts of a house by virtue of their employment, and who, in so inhabiting, must be subject to such directions as their masters choose to give. I cannot see that such directions, if actually given, could affect the existence of the franchise given by the section; but the mere fact that there was power to give directions which were not given appears to me to be quite beside the question. The truth is, that the service franchise is essentially different from the other occupation franchises. It is not given in respect of any property in or right in respect of the place occupied. It is assumed by the section that there is no such right. The person who occupies by virtue of his employment is not even in the position of a tenant at will. He is not a tenant at all, but simply a person who is permitted by his master to occupy, subject to such regulations, if any, as may be made by his master. Then, was the appellant the inhabitant occupier of a 'dwelling-house'? At first sight one would be disposed to say that this cubicle was a very different thing from a dwelling-house. But it is obvious that the extraordinary sense in which the term 'dwelling-house' is used in the Acts relating to the franchise includes things that are totally different from anything which would, in the ordinary use of language, be called a dwelling-house, because any part of a house will suffice if occupied as required by the Act. It need not be any particular part of a house, and it does not matter how small it may be. The extent or nature of the part occupied is immaterial so long as it is occupied separately as a dwelling. This cubicle was none the less part of the whole police barrack, because it was part of a room in it. Whether it was what would ordinarily be calling a dwelling-house is not the question. It was said that it shared the air and light common to the whole room. The Legislature appears to me to have dealt with that very consideration in Section 5 of the Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act 1878, which provides that, 'For the purpose of any of the Acts referred to in this section, where an occupier is entitled to the sole and exclusive use of any part of a house, that part shall not be deemed to be occupied otherwise than separately, by reason only that the occupier is entitled to the joint use of some other part.' I can see no reason for cutting down the generality of those words, which appear to me to meet the contention based upon the enjoyment by the appellant of air and light common to the room of which his cubicle formed a part. In this case the appellant had the key of his cubicle without any interference during the whole of the qualifying period. It is true that, if occasion had arisen, his superior officer might have insisted on going into his cubicle for any purpose; but, as a matter of fact, he appears never to have done so. So that, if the appellant occupied this cubicle at all—and it appears to me clear that he did—his occupation was in fact separate. Then, did he occupy it as a dwelling? I cannot find anything in the section which provides that, in order to come within it, the occupier must occupy with all the powers which a person would have in respect of a dwelling-house in the ordinary sense. The test, as it appears to me, is the nature of the occupation which has in fact taken place, not whether the occupier might have been ordered to occupy in a different manner. Considerable light is thrown on this question by the previous part of Section 5, which provides that 'in and for the purposes of the Reform Act 1832, and the Municipal Corporations Act, the terms "house, warehouse, counting-house, shop, or other building" shall include any part of a house where that part is separately occupied for the purpose of any trade, business, or profession.' If part of a house is in fact separately occupied for the purpose of a trade, business, or profession, the section says that part of a house is to be deemed to be a house. . . . I think the term 'dwelling' is used in the section as an antithesis to 'trade, business, or profession.' I concede that there appears to have been an extensive power of interference with the use by the appellant of this cubicle. But, in order that a man may be an inhabitant occupier, he is not bound to show a title to occupy. He may have been a trespasser, or a tenant at will, or merely on sufferance. The only question is, did he in fact occupy as an inhabitant? With regard to that question whether the subject matter of the occupation was a dwelling-house, I concede, again, that the appellant had not the same rights as persons would have in the case of ordinary dwelling-houses. But the question appears to me to be not whether he had such rights, but whether he separately occupied part of a house as a dwelling. It seems to me that, whatever the powers of the Chief Constable may have been, these cubicles were the dwellings of these policemen, who occupied them by sleeping in them from day to day throughout the qualifying period. I cannot see that using them as sleeping places is anything else but occupying them as dwellings, although the occupants may not have been entitled to use them for other purposes for which people ordinarily use their dwellings. So far as it goes, I think sleeping in a place is using it as a dwelling. In point of fact, these policemen appear to have been allowed, if they liked, to take meals in their cubicles, and not to have been interfered with in the use of them in any way. There was, no doubt, the power of interfering with them; but I do not think that the existence of such a power is made by the Legislature the test. In my opinion, the question is whether they did in fact occupy part of a house as a dwelling, not whether they had a right to occupy in the same manner as that in which a person occupies a 'dwelling-house' in the ordinary sense of the term."

This Measure, which he submitted was an urgent one, did not propose to create any new franchise. It affected only service voters, and, instead of complicating and confusing the existing law, would only more clearly define what was the obvious intention of Parliament in passing the Representation of the People Act. ["Hear, hear!"] He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) proposed to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the question, in order to add instead thereof the words

"this House refuses to add to the confusion and complexity of our present franchise system, which, in its opinion, can be remedied only by the adoption of a single, simple and uniform franchise."

The right hon. Baronet congratulated the hon Member who had just sat down upon his very moderate and able speech in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, but did not think that it covered the whole of the case. It was a gross exaggeration of fact to say that recent decisions of the Court of Appeal affected the votes of nearly the whole police of the country. The overwhelming body of the police were not affected, and would not be affected, by this Bill. The class, however, whom it was, he believed, especially desired to benefit by the provisions was the class of shop assistants. If he thought that the Bill was likely to lead to the permanent benefit of shop assistants, and not to do more harm than good, he would be willing to support it. He had been honoured by some confidence on the part of shop assistants, and had charge of a Measure which they were promoting. But, as a matter of fact, this Bill was open to the most dangerous frauds. He spoke with some knowledge, because he was the author of the Act of 1878 and was concerned in the Act of 1884, in which the service franchise was established, having had to do with the drawing of the clause with the present Lord James and Lord Thring. Parliament had this reason to be cautious—that the lodger franchise, also intended for a very special purpose, had been fraudulently abused to the most extraordinary extent. This Bill was open to fraud on a large scale, because it might mean the creation of hundreds of fraudulent votes in a single building.

Sir J. B. MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): Does the right hon. Baronet attribute fraud to the employers?

*Sir C. DILKE said he was prepared to prove his statement. The service franchise was first suggested by Mr. Trevelyan, now Sir G. Trevelyan, in the interests of the Scotch shepherds and shepherds in the north of England—that was to say, persons who had virtually been in substantial and *bonâ fide* occupation in the same sense in which other agricultural labourers of their district were; but it was seen that the same principle which applied to them applied to coachmen who inhabited stables in London. The only classes who were in the mind of Parliament at the time it passed the service franchise clause were those two classes. He was willing to give the franchise to hundreds of people if they only inhabited a bed in a dormitory, but there were other classes who, if the distinction hitherto drawn was to be maintained, were more entitled to the franchise because more within the view hitherto taken by Parliament. Beds in a dormitory very often were occupied by those who were not heads of a family, who were the sons of other persons who had the vote, but there were hundreds of persons who were heads of families and persons of considerable substance who would remain excluded under this Bill. And this class he would sooner enfranchise first. He was in favour of franchise for all. He believed the support of narrow, niggling franchise points to which the Conservative Party had unfortunately become committed was a mistake, and that even in their own party interest it would be far better to go for a large and generous Measure of enfranchisement, apart from any consideration of bricks and mortar. Coming to the details of the Bill, the first words of the first Section—"Where a man inhabits any dwelling-house"—governed the whole Bill, and yet they were absolutely contradicted by the latter portion. A cubicle was held by the Judges not to be any dwelling-house separately inhabited, and the Bill which attempted to upset those decisions began with the words "where a man inhabits"—the very thing the Courts had said the man did not do. Later on the promoters attempted to say that in spite of that fact the man was to have the vote in certain circumstances, and then they came to the dangerous word "compartment," which would certainly raise more difficulties than the House of Commons attempted to remove by the Act of 1878. The Bill simply "chucked" the difficulty at the heads of the Judges, and left it to the Judges to create a new difficulty in defining what a "compartment" of a room should be. Another most dangerous point was the statement that the vote should be conferred "notwithstanding any control, restrictions, conditions, or disabilities whatsoever imposed on the occupation." He submitted that it was dangerous to introduce those particular words in so sweeping a form. What might be those "conditions"? They might involve, among other things, the absolute reversal of working habits or negative the ordinary presumption of the law. Again, it would be a case of throwing the difficulty at the heads of the Judges for solution, and they would be expected to define what it was the "conditions" were to admit and what it was they were to exclude. The hon. Member said that the Bill was not intended to open the door for the creation of a new class of voters. It would, however, have that effect. Take the marked tendency in some counties for the agricultural labourer living in a regular cottage to be superseded by gangs living for long periods in barns. In Surrey, whence market produce was sent in carts to London, the work was more and more passing into the hands of fixed gangs, who lived in barns, where they were housed by the farmer. Under this Bill a new class of franchise would be created, because the farmer would practically be clothed with the power to make voters of the men he wished, and to refrain from doing so in the case of other men whose names he did not wish to appear on the service franchise form. Hon. Gentlemen were creating this artificial franchise in favour of one special and selected class. It was, indeed, class legislation. [*Cheers.*] The sole persons who would be specially benefited were those who lived under conditions of service, and he maintained that the conferring of the suggested privilege would increase the sense of unfairness and dissatisfaction with the present arrangements of the franchise and registration laws which now existed so widely. Why should hon. Members seek to tinker with the registration and franchise laws? They surely did not believe that to spread the franchise widely in this country would be unsafe for the Conservative Party? The technicalities and trivialities of our present system resulted in the enormous cost of our election and registration methods, and this costly feature was not only peculiar to this country, but it was a scandal. This Bill would increase that cost, because through it the promoters would increase the necessity for legal assistance and for appeals to the Courts. He asked the House to take the view that, whether we followed New Zealand and South Australia in adopting adult suffrage, or the example of other States in adopting manhood suffrage, one or other of those two simple bases of franchise was the only means of getting rid of the costly and fraudulent technicalities which this Bill would, if passed, only aggravate and not remedy. [*Cheers.*] He concluded by moving his Amendment.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) supported the right hon. Baronet's Amendment. He was a believer in the universal franchise. It seemed to him to be very illogical that they should have women voting in local affairs, and yet deprived of the Parliamentary vote. This view was unpopular at present in the country, but he did not believe it would remain long unpopular. The Bill would be likely to lead to gerrymandering, and would increase the complexity of the register. It would also have a tendency to increase the expenses of both political parties, because the list of objections to claims would be greatly enlarged. If the Bill were passed, every coffee-house or eating-house proprietor, every publican in his constituency, would be able to create a number of votes in view of an approaching election. [Sir J. B. MAPLE pointed out that those whom the Bill would enfranchise must have occupied their premises for the qualifying period.] The hon. Member did not seem to contemplate cases of fraud, which would certainly arise. The Bill would have curious consequences. Supposing four shop assistants occupied one room of the value of 5s. a week, they would all get the franchise, while their fathers, men of much riper experience, might be paying only 3s. 9d. a week for their respective dwellings, and in that case would not have a vote. Then any one of these four young men who married and went to live elsewhere would cease to be a voter unless he could pay 4s. rent. His rent might be 3s. 9d., but he would not have a vote, although he had had one when occupying with three other people a room of the rental value of 5s., or 1s. 3d. per head. The effect of the Bill upon the position of the police would be very small. He represented probably more metropolitan policemen than did any other Member, and in his constituency only about a dozen constables out of 400 or 500 lived in barracks. The Bill said that a man might be entitled to be registered and to vote, notwithstanding that the dwelling house which he occupied was merely a compartment of a room. He wished to know whether it was intended that painted lines on the floor of a room, separating it into squares, should constitute compartments conferring the franchise? The Measure would enfranchise men who had but little stake in the country—men who paid a rent of about 2s. a week, and who were for the most part engaged in the lowest class of labour.

SIR J. B. MAPLE thought it very strange that advocates of the principle of universal suffrage should adduce all the arguments they could muster against an attempt to extend the operation of the franchise. The two hon. Members who had preceded him were trying to prevent a lot of honest men who ought to have the vote from being put upon the register. The object of the Bill was to simplify the law, and to benefit men whom Mr. Gladstone in 1884 intended to enfranchise. Mr. Gladstone explained at the time that it was intended to create a new service franchise, and he believed that the right hon. Gentleman then wished that all those who were equal in position to agricultural labourers should have the advantage of the franchise. He was ashamed to hear the right hon. Baronet say that if this Bill were passed it would lead to fraud. The right hon. Baronet attributed to all heads of establishments that they would fraudulently return the names of men as having been 12 months in their employ. He was sorry indeed that any one should consider the class with which he had been identified all his life such a despicable and dishonest set of men. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman, who professed to go in for universal suffrage, was now proceeding to do all he could to prevent a large number of men, who would have a vote if there were universal suffrage, from getting the franchise, because he thought it would lead to fraud. Many men who were entitled to the vote were now disfranchised through the uncertainty of the law as to the service franchise, and they must remain without the vote unless this Bill were passed. The right hon. Baronet was himself in power in 1884 and 1885, with the right hon. Gentleman who formerly represented Midlothian. They then had the opportunity to bring in a universal suffrage Bill if they had wished to do so, but they did not do it. They brought in a Bill giving the service franchise, and the present Bill was an endeavour to make that Bill clear. ["Hear, hear!"] As regarded the question of control, in nearly every single instance of the service franchise the occupier was under some control. He had a place in the country on which cottages were occupied by gardeners and others, and they were not allowed to smoke in their cottages. According to Lord Esher, if any such condition existed, those men were not entitled to the vote. Lord Esher laid it down clearly that no man was entitled to the service franchise unless he could go in and out when he liked, and do what he pleased in the house. Lord Justice Lopes agreed with Lord Esher in that, but Lord Justice Rigby as thoroughly disagreed, and pointed out that it was intended that a man in the enjoyment of a cubicle was entitled to a vote. This Bill was drafted simply to give effect to Lord Justice Rigby's view. ["Hear, hear!"] The promoters of the Bill did not want to create a new vote, but simply to make the service franchise clear and explicit. He contended that Lord Esher's decision made it possible for any man who so wished to destroy the power of anyone in his service to vote, because he disagreed with him in politics, and to do so by merely putting restrictions on his occupancy. He knew well that there were a great many other people who ought to have the franchise, and he and his friends were quite willing that they should have it, but that was no reason why this Bill should not pass. ["Hear, hear!"] He hoped that the right hon. Baronet would withdraw his opposition, and that the Bill would pass without a division, for he believed it would be equally to the advantage of Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House. He could not imagine that hon. Gentlemen opposite could really wish to prevent the passing of a Bill which, instead of creating difficulties, would simplify the law and prevent from being disqualified men whom the law intended should be qualified. He trusted the Measure would be allowed to pass rapidly, so that before the next registrations took place, the revising barristers would know whom to put on the registers. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) observed that the Bill enabled employers at pleasure to enfranchise and disfranchise the service occupants. The Bill gave employers greater power, so far as structural alterations were concerned, to enfranchise and disfranchise, but it took away the power to disfranchise merely by imposing restrictions. He was surprised that so little caution had been exercised in this constitutional change by hon. Members opposite. ["Hear, hear!"] Had such a Measure as this been put forward by what he might call some of the more uncontrolled intellects on the Opposition side of the House, it would not have created so much matter of surprise. ["Hear, hear!" *and a laugh.*] Hon. Members opposite, who had maintained constitutional reforms and rights, must be aware upon what principles the franchise existed in this country at the present time. The franchise was primarily based on property qualification. Subsequently they had got a household occupation qualification. They had also got a lodger qualification, which was in its nature a property qualification, inasmuch as a £10 rateable value was essential.

AN HON. MEMBER: I beg, Mr. Speaker, to call your attention to the fact that there are not 40 Members present.

After the usual interval MR. SPEAKER counted, and found that there was just a quorum.

Sir J. B. Maple.

*MR. McKENNA, resuming, said, when the household franchise was established, Parliament placed it under the restriction of the words "inhabitant occupiers of dwelling houses," and it was upon the construction of those words that the qualification existed. What was to be done under this Bill? It was proposed that the limitation imposed by these words should be taken away in a single case, and in a single case only. Take the case of undergraduates. They were not under this Bill to be entitled to have a vote. They had no vote now, as they were not regarded as inhabitant occupiers. It was the same with certain Canons, who were disqualified because they were only in residence for a certain period of the year. Then as to the lodger franchise, Parliament took care to impose restrictions. Only two persons could be on the register in respect to a single dwelling. What was the reason? The reason was that Parliament feared they might get a number of lodger applications over which the revising barrister could have no control. If that care had not been taken, they might have 20 or 30 voters in one house, and there could be no certainty that they were properly qualified under the law. He hoped the hon. Member for Dulwich would understand that he had not and could not have any reason to charge any person connected with the Bill with being likely to promote any of the evils he was about to suggest. He knew that the hon. Member for Dulwich, a large employer of labour, was undoubtedly absolutely fair in the treatment of his men, and would scorn to impose any political restrictions upon any one of them. The House would, however, remember that under this new service franchise the overseer would not be able to enter the names himself. The overseer would have to accept the list of the persons from the employer of labour, and would have absolutely no check upon the list. Certain names would be handed to the overseer, and he would not be able to say whether any particular person had occupied any particular compartment or not; he would have no means of identifying the persons, or of saying whether anyone was qualified or disqualified. With the list before him, what power had the overseer or the political agent of either party of objecting to any person? The revising barrister, the overseer, and the political agents must be entirely in the hands of the employer for the purpose of determining whether particular persons were or were not qualified.

SIR J. B. MAPLE asked if the hon. Gentleman was aware that the names of everybody entitled to vote were published?

*MR. MCKENNA said he was aware that the names would be published on the church doors, but the hon. Gentleman knew as well as he that the number of persons who studied the list was so limited that as a protection such publication was practically worthless. As a matter of fact, the names put on the list by the overseers were in 99 cases out of 100 accepted without objection. In this particular case there would be no means of inquiry; it would not be possible for the registration agent of either party to object to any particular name. That was a very serious danger, and an overwhelming reason why the enfranchisement of these persons could not be done by the method proposed by the Bill, but should be done by the method suggested by the right hon. Baronet, viz., by an enfranchisement of all persons. The next objection he had to the Measure was that undeniably it placed the power of enfranchising and disfranchising in the hands of employers of labour by the slightest of structural alterations. The merest dividing line would constitute a compartment in the room. Let the House consider for one moment the absolute control which such a provision gave to the employer of labour to enfranchise and disfranchise. Why was it that only one person might vote now in respect to a single dwelling? Because only one person could be identified as the ratepayer. Parliament had been overwhelmingly cautious in the past. Had Parliament been mistaken? If it had been mistaken let the precautions be removed for all persons, and not merely for that class of persons who were in service, and bound to obey the orders of their employers. Why should such a far-reaching Measure as this be allowed by the Government to be brought forward by private Members on a Wednesday afternoon without the Government expressing, at any rate, so far, any responsibility for it? Registration reform was part of the programme of the responsible leaders of the Conservative Party at the last Election. Registration reform introduced by the Government would be of a more comprehensive character than this Bill. Let hon. Members opposite rely with confidence upon the electoral promises of their own leaders. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] It seemed that hon. Gentlemen opposite shared with him some doubt as to the reliability that was to be placed on the electoral promises of the occupants of the Government Bench. It had been shown that this Measure was partial in its character, and that although it remedied an evil it remedied that evil in the wrong way. Another objection he had to the Measure as it now stood was that under the construction which the Courts had put on the term "inhabits," a person who inhabited a house must sleep in it. It did not appear that under this Bill it was necessary for a person to sleep in the compartment he occupied. Under the circumstances, he trusted the promoters of the Bill would withdraw the Measure, and rely with confidence upon the leaders of the Conservative Party introducing a proper Measure in due time.

On the return of Mr. Speaker after the usual interval,

MR. ROBERT ASCROFT (Oldham) said he thought that the House was justified in refusing to agree to the suggestion which had been made that they should wait until the Government thought proper to bring in a scheme dealing with registration and with redistribution. There was a great grievance and injustice to a large number of ratepayers which they desired to redress. That grievance had not been caused by the action of hon. Members on that side of the House, but by a decision of the Court of Appeal. There was no doubt that hundreds of ratepayers who had been placed on the register, and who had exercised their right to vote, would at the next election be removed from the list, and be denied all right of taking their part in the legislation of this country. He therefore protested against the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean that this was an attempt to place on the register a new class of voters. He submitted that the House would be neglecting its duty did it not follow up the suggestions and arguments which had been given by hon. Members on that side. The hon. Member for Monmouth had said that an injustice was also done to Undergraduates. That was not an objection to this Bill, but it would be a good ground for the hon. Member, when they got into Committee, to move an Amendment for the purpose of extending the Bill in that direction. They did not want to alter the existing registration law, but to carry out what were the intentions of Parliament when the Act was passed. With respect to the argument of the hon. and gallant Member for Newington, he thought that if only 12 police constables would be affected in his constituency that was a good reason for the Bill, and not a reason for its withdrawal. He believed those who had listened to the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean must think that in reality he was not an opponent but a supporter of the Bill, and he would be much surprised if the right hon. Gentleman did not go into the Lobby with them. The object of the Bill was good, and questions of draftsmanship and wording were matters for the Committee stage. The right hon. Gentleman desired a broad and generous measure of franchise, and hon. Members on that side of the House would be equally willing to make such a scheme effective, coupled no doubt with a redistribution scheme. The Bill did not attempt to create a new class of voters. They were told that farmers might bring down a large number of hop-pickers and put them into barns, thus making voters of them, but this difficulty had not been experienced in the past. The hon. Member for Monmouth said something about Undergraduates at Oxford and about Canons, but surely that was a rather ridiculous objection to raise to a Measure of this description. Then they were told that they were tinkering with the franchise. In fact, from beginning to end of the speeches opposite it came simply to this—the great scheme of enfranchisement must be dealt with once for all. He felt perfectly certain that Members opposite could not oppose this Bill seriously and conscientiously, and he did not think the hon. Member would care to go before his constituents on the ground that he opposed a Bill intended to remove a grievance and to remedy an injustice. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he had come down to the House rather inclined to oppose the Bill, but he had an open mind. The speeches of his right hon. Friend (Sir C. Dilke) and his hon. Friend (Mr. McKenna) had converted him. He should support the Bill. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He quite agreed with his hon. Friend. There were no doubt a great many defects in the Bill, but they might be considered in Committee. ["Hear, hear!"] But there never had been a Bill which was not capable of amendment. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to get that admission, seeing that the most important Bill of the Session passed through the House without any amendment at all. [*Cheers and laughter.*] He had listened very carefully to the speeches of his right hon. Friend and his hon. Friend. He had come to the conclusion that the Bill was a good Bill, and he could not refrain from saying a word in its favour. The only thing they were entitled to ask, he thought, was that when the Bill got into Committee, the promoters of it would accept *bonâ fide* amendments, and that there should be no attempt to rush the Bill through the House. He had not the least doubt that it would then be a useful Bill. His great reason for supporting the Bill was that it was an extension of the franchise. The hon. Member for Monmouth said there were other inequalities, but that was no answer to this Bill. Did the hon. Member bring in a Bill to redress those grievances? But surely the fact that other classes had grievances was no reason why they should withhold the franchise from an important and deserving class. ["Hear, hear!"] They could not get sweeping reforms carried. This was the way in which the franchise had been extended from time to time. They must go on by degrees. [*Cheers.*]

*CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) trusted the House would excuse him in making a few observations on this Bill, as the interests of his constituents were largely affected. He could assure hon. Members opposite that there was no intention by this Bill to make large constitutional reforms. It was simply a Bill to give back the rights and privileges granted by the Act of 1884, and which had been taken away by the recent decision of the Court of Appeal.

He thought that the police, the members of the fire brigade and soldiers had been deprived of the franchise contrary to the intention of Parliament. The hon. Member who had just sat down had told them that if they were willing to accept *bonâ fide* Amendments there would be no objection to the Bill. They would be quite ready to accept them; and speaking on behalf of the promoters of the Bill, he said they should be only too glad to accept any Amendment which would not strike at the principle of the Bill. Their sole object was to remedy a grievance. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said that, in common with many others, he took the same view as the hon. Member for Carnarvon of the speeches delivered by the Members for the Forest of Dean and North Monmouth. The hon. Member said he had come to the House rather intending to oppose the Bill, but with an open mind; and that he had been converted by the speches referred to. They were told that they ought not to remedy a small matter of this kind without going in for a large and comprehensive measure. It was all very well to take up this high and dry attitude, but he thought it would be difficult to get those who were suffering from the grievance to share that view. Those who had opposed the Bill had forgotten the provision contained in the Act of 1878. Under that Act the Legislature had recognised the separate occupation of part of a house, and that must have been in the mind of the Legislature when it passed the Bill of 1884. They must take it that Parliament was looking at the sort of occupation which would confer the vote. Objection was taken on the ground that the Bill did not confer the franchise on Undergraduates and Canons, but he thought the hon. Member who raised that point overlooked what was the objection in these cases—namely, that there was no continuous 12 months' occupation. Then the hon. Member asked, Why should they not deal with the case of young colliers who took a house jointly and occupied it? This Bill professed to deal only with the case of those who inhabited dwelling-houses by virtue of their employment, and where the dwelling-house was part of the premises of the employer. If the colliers who clubbed together for the purpose of taking a house had the house divided, so that each occupied it separately, then each collier would be in possession of a dwelling-house, and would be entitled to a vote. But there was no severance in that case; therefore, he submitted that the grievance the hon. Member referred to in this matter, by reason of the Bill not being more extensive in its scope, was purely theoretical and had no relation to actual fact. The hon. Member had said that the Bill would apply only to cases where the dwelling-house consisted of a mere compartment in a room. He did not at all agree with that view. He thought the effect of the Bill was that where there was an occupation of a dwelling-house—whether it be the whole or part or a compartment in a room—such occupation, in virtue of service, was sufficient to confer the franchise, notwithstanding any conditions, restrictions, or disabilities imposed upon the occupation. He did not at all agree that the operation which relieved the occupier from the effect of the conditions or restrictions would be confined to the case where the dwelling-house occupied was merely a compartment in a room. But, after all, that was a matter for consideration in Committee, and if there was anything in that or other points raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman, it would be most fully considered. ["Hear, hear!"] Again, the hon. Member had criticised the Bill because it did not deal with the question of what constituted the inhabitancy of a dwelling-house. That was perfectly true, and, in his opinion, the framers of the Measure had been well advised in not attempting to deal with such a point. The Bill had been directed solely to removing grievances felt by many persons in consequence of a recent decision of the Court of Appeal, and to embark on the question of what constituted inhabitancy would be to raise many problems. A good deal had been said about the revolutionary character of the Bill, but what it did was in effect merely to declare the law to be as laid down by that very distinguished Judge, Lord Justice Rigby. The Bill dealt with two points. The first was whether the fact that the dwelling-house in question merely consisted of a compartment of a room, or a cubicle separated by partitions not going to the ceiling from the rest of the room, prevented its being a dwelling-house for the purpose of conferring the franchise. The majority of the Judges in the case of Clutterbuck *v.* Taylor held that the claimant failed in his assertion to the right of the franchise. This Bill remedied that grievance, and it put into Parliamentary language the view of Lord Justice Rigby, who held that the claimant was the occupant of a dwelling-house and was entitled to a vote, as the Franchise Acts, in referring to the expression "a dwelling-house," could not be confined to the ordinary sense of the words. The second question dealt with was that of the restrictions and conditions that were imposed upon the occupation of these cubicles by those who enjoyed them in virtue of their service. The majority of the Court, again differing from Lord Justice Rigby, held that the conditions were such that the franchise was not acquired. The Bill provided that these restrictions on occupation should not debar a man from having a vote, and, as in the previous point, merely put in Parliamentary language what Lord Justice Rigby said. Upon the whole, it appeared to him that the House would be well advised in agreeing to the Second Reading of the Measure. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) observed that he might be pardoned for speaking on this question, as the city of Derry, which he represented, had sent more cases to the Court of Appeal in Ireland relating to anomalies of the franchise than all the rest of the United Kingdom put together. It was his interest, as well as that of his constituents, to support any Measure which had for its object the extension of the franchise. But what he noticed was that when hon. Members brought forward measures of electoral reform, they were invariably designed to remove one or two anomalies which happened to tell against their own party. Their policy was to get as many of their own supporters on the register as they could, and to keep off as many supporters of the other side as possible. This Bill was obviously designed for the party advantage of the Gentlemen who brought it forward. He supported the Amendment because he ventured to think the anomalies as a whole in the electoral system were becoming such an absurdity that it was essential they should be removed by the Government in a thorough way. He could not say that the Liberal Party could claim that they, when they were in office, did deal with these questions in a thorough way. They introduced three Bills in succession, and as those Bills went on, they became less thorough. The result of the attempts made by the Liberal Leaders in the last Parliament to tinker with the electoral law only showed all the more certainly that if they were to improve the present registration laws and to get some simple system, they would have to abandon their whole elaborate system of fancy franchise and go to one of those simple and single qualifications which had been adopted by other countries. There were at the present time twelve separate qualifications under which a man might become entitled to a vote in this country, and so long as they kept up this variety of qualifications they would have, in every constituency every year, the process of fighting out claim after claim in the registration courts, at great expense to both political parties. The waste of time and money in the registration courts in every closely contested constituency in England and Ireland was one of the scandals of the time, and there was no way to remove that scandal except, he ventured to think, by giving up all these varieties of qualifications, and passing on to the policy adopted by most other countries both on the Continent of Europe and America of manhood suffrage. Once they made that step, which he suggested was what the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean desired, it would no longer be necessary to have an annual revision at all. That being the only logical outcome of their electoral difficulties, they would only make matters worse by attempting further to tinker with the present system. Every additional qualification or every slight modification of the existing qualifications they introduced would only the more increase the annual struggle in the registration courts, add to the political expenditure of both Parties, and place more difficulties in the way of poor men who wished to take part in politics. It was quite true that the Bill removed one anomaly.

It certainly was an anomaly that the fact that, with obvious benefit to themselves, those gentlemen who lived in cubicles shared the air of the whole compartment, should deprive them of the franchise. The Bill removed that absurd anomaly, but it created or perpetuated several others equally absurd. It made it the law that for the future a man who inhabited one of these cubicles, and had no further control over the means of ingress and of egress, should have a vote if he was a servant and had an occupation as a servant, but that he should not have a vote if he paid for it as a tenant. That he thought was an absurd anomaly. It was an absurdity that they should confer a franchise upon the man who paid nothing for his cubicle, and deny it to the man who paid for his cubicle. It might be said that this objection was frivolous; but, as a matter of fact, an anomaly somewhat similar, even if at all different, did occur and was a matter of constant controversy in Derry, and he believed in other places, especially in Scotland. He understood that his right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean was not opposed to men living in cubicles having votes. His right hon. Friend wished all men to have votes; but why should the man who lived in a cubicle in his master's house have a vote if his master did not reside on the premises, and yet be denied a vote if his master resided on the premises; or, why should a man who lived in a cubicle have a vote if he had it in virtue of his services, and be denied a vote if he paid for it as a tenant?

*Colonel HUGHES (Woolwich thought the supporters of this Bill would find themselves in a difficult position hereafter with regard to further extensions of the franchise. It would, for example, be impossible to maintain the lodger franchise at the present value of £10 if this Bill passed, because every person who slept in a cubicle would naturally claim the same right as a servant who slept in a cubicle. The same would apply to tenement houses. It would not be a question of occupying a room simply divided from other parts of the house, but of making half-a-dozen cubicles in each of the rooms, and each of those beds would be entitled to a vote if occupied. The statutory period of twelve months was a certain protection, no doubt, but that period might by-and-bye be shortened to six or even three months. He believed cubicles in common lodging-houses had often the same tenant for six or twelve months. If this Bill passed, he saw no way of resisting manhood suffrage. It might be said that this particular Bill remedied a grievance felt by a deserving class, but Statesmen ought to look at the matter in its general aspects. He could not see why a servant living in his master's house and sleeping in a cubicle should not have this privilege just as much as in the case of a man whose master did not live on the premises. Until he heard that his Leaders were prepared for manhood suffrage, he was bound to vote against this Bill.

Mr. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had hit upon the weak point of the Bill. It would be felt with especial severity as far as Scotland was concerned. They would be able to enfranchise a very large proportion of farm servants—those who happened to sleep in bothies, but on the other hand, those who slept in the farm house would not come under the operation of the Bill. He hoped this was a point on which the promoters of the Bill would keep an open mind when the Bill got into Committee. As far as the principle of the Bill was concerned, he was in favour of it. He desired to see a uniform franchise. The Bill was unsatisfactory in some respects, but still it was a step in the direction he desired, and that being so, he should vote in favour of the Second Reading.

*Sir C. DILKE asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Mr. MARKS moved: "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, Etc."

Mr. KNOX submitted that this was an objectionable course. A Franchise Bill was peculiarly one of general importance, and it was most desirable, therefore, that it should be considered in Committee of the whole House, where fair consideration could be given to all the Amendments. He appealed to the hon. Member not to press his Motion.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) supported the appeal of the hon. Member. He certainly thought that this, being a matter concerning the constitution of this House and involving an important principle of electoral law, should be discussed and decided in Committee of the whole House.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton), taking the same view, believed there was no precedent for a Bill affecting the franchise being referred to other than a Committee of the whole House. This was a simple, clear Bill, conferring manhood suffrage. It was undesirable in his judgment that the House should put any barrier between itself and the full consideration of this extremely important Bill in Committee of the House. The House had taken a step, the importance of which could not be overestimated, and he thought it was impossible for it to check itself on the course upon which it had now entered.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said that the proposal before the House involved a grave departure from the original intention of the House in setting up the Standing Committees on Law and Trade. In fact, the proposal was a flank movement in the promotion of manhood suffrage; it involved important constitutional considerations, and could not fail to have important results hereafter. He submitted to the First Lord of the Treasury that the question which the House had decided was not one which could well be disposed of without some intimation from the Government as to their view of the suggestion now before them.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) hoped that the First Lord of the Treasury would give the House some guidance on this question. He concurred in the view which had been expressed that this Bill involved a great change in the franchise, and that it was not a Measure which ought to be sent to a Standing Committee. It was a Bill the importance of which it was impossible to exaggerate, and therefore its details ought to be dealt with in Committee of the whole House. He looked upon the Bill as a Measure which embodied a great constitutional change, every stage of which should be in the hands of the House. The Standing Committees were intended to deal with commercial details and technical matters, and he objected to a precedent of this kind being established, because if the Measure passed the Standing Committee without amendment, its future conduct would be practically taken out of the control of the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said he did not assent to the description of the Bill given either by the right hon. Gentleman or by those who had spoken on the other side of the House when they described it as a great constitutional change. He did not think it was so either in form or in substance. After all, the Bill in substance only restored a practice which had been upset by a recent decision; and if that were true, it was an excess of language to say that the Bill involved a grave constitutional change. On the other hand, though he did not go the length of the right hon. Gentleman in his description, it was impossible to deny that as far as it went this was a reform—in other words, it was a Bill dealing with the franchise of the country. If the House could confine itself to this Bill alone, and say that there would never again be a large Measure dealing with the franchise question, and, therefore, that there would be no precedent set in sending the Bill to a Grand Committee, he should be inclined to assent to the suggestion to send this Bill upstairs. But he thought it would be a dangerous precedent, a dangerous example—[*cheers*]—to say that a Bill which, as far as it went, was a Reform Bill, was one which it was proper to deal with in a Grand Committee. The right hon. Gentleman suggested a further danger, which, though probably it would not prove to be operative, was nevertheless a possible one—the danger that the Bill might pass through the Grand Committee unchanged. On other occasions he had pointed out to the House the danger of a Rule which was quite proper as applied to proceedings in the House—that a Bill passing through Committee without amendment should not go through the Report stage—was a very dangerous Rule when applied to a Grand Committee. The House generally would feel that such a result would be a great scandal; and, therefore, he was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that, in the interests of the general conduct of the business in the House, this Bill should be retained within their control in all its stages. [" Hear, hear! "]

Mr. MARKS asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House for To-morrow.

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON (ELECTIONS) BILL.

Sir J. B. MAPLE moved, "That this Bill be now read a Second time." He said the object of the Bill was to assimilate the divisions at present existing for the School Board to the divisions now used in Parliamentary and County Council elections. The present divisions were very large. Marylebone contained nine Parliamentary divisions, with a population of nearly 600,000 and an electorate of nearly 60,000 voters. The Bill abolished the cumulative vote, which practical experience had shown to be of little or no value. It was ludicrous to preserve this system of cumulative voting. The object of the cumulative vote was to give a representation to the minority; but the Roman Catholics were the minority, and they were not represented on the School Board, so no hardship would be inflicted by the change proposed. The Bill had been discussed by all the vestries and local authorities of London, and he had received from them resolutions in its favour. It would have the effect of reducing expenses; it was not a Party Measure; it would simplify the elections enormously, and would render it possible for the representatives to pay more regard to the interests of the neighbourhood for which they were returned. In an election in West Lambeth one candidate received no less than 48,000 votes, and the constituency extended from Camberwell Green to the Crystal Palace. With such enormous constituencies, it was impossible for any candidate to make himself really appreciated when he came before the electors. The Measure followed the lines of the Redistribution Bill of 1885. It would result in a more direct representation of the people, who would feel that they were more in touch with their representatives than they were now. The only Metropolitan Member, he believed, who opposed the Bill was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London, who objected to the abolition of the cumulative vote, which institution they knew was one of his pet subjects. One of the provisions of the Bill would reduce the representation of the City to two members. The City had only two Board Schools within its area, and although it contributed very largely to the expenses of the School Board he considered that the representation which the Bill would provide for it would be quite sufficient. If, however, in Committee it should be thought desirable to give the City four representatives instead of two, he would not himself oppose the Amendment. He concluded by moving that the Bill be read a Second time.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University) proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." He observed that he would leave the duty of defending the interests of the City to those who represented that constituency. He, however, asked the House to bear in mind that, although it was true that there was not a large number of children or schools in the City, that part of London, nevertheless, contributed very largely towards the educational expenditure of the Metropolis. It was, therefore, in his opinion, only fair that the City should be adequately represented on the School Board. He regarded the question with which the Bill was concerned from the point of view of education, and thus viewing it he earnestly hoped that the House would not consent to read the Bill a Second time. The question of the cumulative vote was carefully inquired into in 1885 by a very strong Committee of that House. Mr. Forster himself gave evidence, and, being asked what was his opinion of the working of the cumulative vote, said, "I think the first working of the Act was much facilitated by it," and he went on to point out that Nonconformists in rural districts were mainly admitted by it. Without the cumulative vote, it would not have been easy for Roman Catholics in London to secure a representative on the School Board. He was not a Roman Catholic himself, and held that it would be a great advantage if every one in this country were a Protestant; but as many of their fellow-subjects were Roman Catholics, it was only fair that they should be represented on School Boards. In some parts of the country even members of the Church of England would have very little chance of being fairly represented if it were not for the operation of the cumulative system. It was therefore to the advantage of the Church of England, of Roman Catholics, and of Nonconformists alike to retain this system, which insured to all of them some share, at any rate, of representation upon our School Boards. Sir Francis Sandford, who was permanent Secretary of the Education Department when the Act passed, was also examined before the Committee of 1885, and gave strong evidence in favour of the present system. He said:—

> "I think it (the cumulative vote) has succeeded in securing the return of a very varied representation of all interests, which was the avowed object of its introduction."

He was then asked:—

> "Do you think it has made these differences easier to be got over or not?"

and he answered:—

> "Much easier to be got over." "Was there any extensive wish for a change?"—I never heard of any such extensive wish to get rid of the clause." "You would rather have it than not?"—"I should rather have had it than not." "Would compulsion have been more difficult?"—"Much more difficult." "You believe that the working of the cumulative vote has largely contributed to the success of the Act?"—"I think so."

Sir F. Sandford was succeeded by Mr. Cumin, who was permanent Secretary when the Committee sat. He took entirely the same view.

> "My opinion," he said, "is that it would not have been possible to have carried the Act into effect, and certainly there would have been more friction if the cumulative vote had not been in existence."

He was asked "Do you think the same argument applies now?" and he replied "I think so." Asked as to change he said, "I should prefer very much to keep to the present system." Mr. Birley, Chairman of the Manchester School Board, was asked as to the Parliamentary system of voting, and said:

> "To my mind it would not so well represent the feelings of those especially interested in education";

and Mr. Kennedy, Clerk to the School Board of Glasgow, was asked:—

> "Are the Committee, then, to conclude that you are of opinion that on the whole the cumulative vote has worked will in your constituency?"

and he answered, "Yes, I think it has." Again, Mr. Ewing, Chairman of the Dumfries School Board, being asked, "Are you satisfied with the working of the cumulative vote?" said "Quite satisfied." Strong evidence to the same effect was given by the hon. Member for Donegal, who said that in his opinion the working of the cumulative vote had had the most important effect in securing fair play on the London School Board for the Catholics. But those were not all the authorities in favour of the cumulative vote. Later still a large Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the operation of the Education Acts. Their final Report was issued in 1888, and they said:—

> "We are in favour of retaining some form of proportional representation in our School Board elections, and we should be glad to see the adoption of the single transferable vote, which possesses the advantages of the cumulative vote, without the inconvenience which sometimes arises in the operation of the latter."

This was signed by Lord Cross, Cardinal Manning, the Duke of Norfolk, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir Francis Sandford, Lord Harrowby, Lord Norton, Dr. Rigg, and others, while those members who signed the minority Report expressly pointed out the points on which they differed, and made no allusion to this important paragraph, so that the Commission may be said to have been unanimously of this opinion. ["Hear, hear!"] It was most important that differences of opinion, educational and religious, should be fairly represented on School Boards. That was to some extent obtained under the present system; but the security would be entirely swept away if the present Bill became law. ["Hear, hear!"] It was clear, therefore, that the weight of educational authority was in favour of the present system and against this Bill; but on general grounds also he maintained that it would be a great mistake. The most important point to be secured in any electoral system was that the majority should rule, and the second, that the minority should be heard, ["Hear, hear!"] The system proposed by the Bill failed in both. He need not occupy the time of the House in proving that if the majority was equally spread over the Metropolis they would secure all the seats, and would represent, not London, but only the majority in London. On the other hand, the system of single member seats, as proposed in the Bill, did not secure a majority of seats to a majority of votes. There was a remarkable illustration in the last Parliamentary election. On the uncontested seats the Unionists had a majority of 72 seats. But there were 481 which were contested. And what happened? In these constituencies the Home Rulers polled 25,000 votes more than the Unionists. [*Opposition cheers.*] That ought to have given them a majority of two seats, reducing the total Unionist majority to 70. [*Opposition cheers.*] As a matter of fact, though Unionists polled 25,000 fewer votes, they obtained 79 more seats. Of course they were pleased, but it must in candour be admitted that it was a mockery of representation. [*Opposition cheers.*] This was no isolated case. Take the last two London County Council elections. At the last the Moderates polled 12,500 more votes, but the seats were exactly equal; while in the previous election the Progressives had the same majority of votes, but it gave them a large majority of seats. He would give one more illustration. In the last Canadian election, Sir Charles Tupper's Party polled 25,000 votes more than Mr. Laurier's; and yet Mr. Laurier's secured a large majority of seats. In fact, under the system of single member seats, the result of a General Election did not depend on the number of the votes given to either side, but on the manner in which they were distributed. ["Hear, hear!"] This was no doubt the main reason why proportional representation was gradually making its way in advancing communities. It had long been in operation in Denmark; it had been adopted in Belgium. A few years ago it was introduced into the Swiss Canton of Ticino, and was found so great an improvement that it had since been adopted by the Cantons of Geneva, Neufchatel, Basle, and Zug, and seemed likely to be adopted in others also. Another objection to the Bill was that the present system tended to secure some continuity of policy. This Bill was of more importance than might at first seem to be the case, because if the change was made in London it would probably be extended elsewhere. He believed with the Education Commission that the single transferable vote was the best system; but that to abandon the cumulative vote for that of single member constituencies would be a great mistake. He thought he had shown that in the opinion of most educational authorities, including four Ministers of Education, the present system had especial value from an educational point of view, and that as regards the importance of securing a faithful representation of the electors, the Bill now before the House would be a step backwards. ["Hear, hear!"] He begged to move that the Bill be Read a Second time that day six months.

*Mr. BRODIE HOARE (Hampstead) said he was strongly impressed with the urgent necessity for a redistribution of electoral areas, but not of the necessity for abolishing the cumulative vote. Speaking for his own constituency, he could say that it was absolutely essential that the large electoral areas for School Board purposes in London and the suburbs should be readjusted. In 1870 the population of Hampstead was about 25,000, and it was then not improperly made part of the constituency of Marylebone. Now the population was over 70,000, and as a population of 70,000, it seemed absurd that it should be lumped with St. John's Wood, Paddington, and other places with which Hampstead had no more connection than it had with Lambeth or Poplar. A population of 70,000 was surely entitled to a representatitve of its own on the Board. Other parts of London must be in a similar position to Hampstead. He supported the Second Reading of the Bill on the ground that it was essential that at an early date, if possible, there should be a redistribution of electoral areas in

London. At present there were overlapping areas of most inconvenient size, and in many cases the people had not the slightest idea where or for whom they were voting. He acknowledged the authority of the right hon. Member for London University on the subject of proportional representation, and would not go into that subject, but he respectfully urged on the promoters of the Bill that the abolition of cumulative voting was unnecessary, and that the Bill should be confined to the redistribution of electoral areas in and around London.

Mr. STUART desired to support the Second Reading of the Bill, which was originally proposed from the Liberal side of the House, and would have been introduced into the last Parliament had its promoters been able to obtain the concurrence of hon. Members for London on the Conservative side. It was felt that it would not be possible to alter the general law of the land unless there was a consensus of opinion among hon. Members representing London constituencies on both sides. But whatever view was taken, there was no blinking the fact that the logical outcome of the Bill would be a Measure for the rest of the country. Undoubtedly there were difficulties in London which did not exist in other places, because of the want of unity in London as a whole, and the great difficulties of drawing lines of demarcation. But in Manchester, for instance, there were just as large electoral areas as in London or anywhere else. He supported this Bill, believing it to be a step towards a better electoral system for School Board elections. The basis of the argument of the right hon. Member for London University seemed to be that there should be denominational representation upon the School Boards.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK remarked that what he said was "that the majority of the electors should secure the majority of representation," and this Bill would not provide for that.

Mr. STUART thought much harm had been done to elementary education, not only by denominational strife, but by the fact that this strife had been distinctly encouraged by the system of elections to School Boards, and he would welcome the assimilation of the electoral areas for School Board elections to those for Parliamentary elections, because then the education given and its details would be more the subject of contest than the denominational character of the instruction given. He regretted that the Bill left the School Board constituencies unaltered. One of the troubles under which they laboured—and every one knew it—with respect to School Board elections, was that there was no register. The absence of this made it difficult for people to know where, when, and how they were to vote. It very much complicated elections, and he wished the Bill had introduced not only a change of area, but a definite statement as to the register on which the elections for School Boards should be taken. It was an essential reform which he regretted had not been introduced into a Bill the general character of which he approved.

*Colonel HUGHES said that he seldom troubled the House on any matter on which he had not special knowledge, and this was one on which he had special knowledge both as senior Member for the London boroughs and as a Member for six years of the London School Board. He could assure the House that the School Board electoral areas were much too large at present. Good candidates were often prevented from standing at School Board elections because of the enormous area. When he stood, 16 or 17 years ago, for the Division of Greenwich, he found it comprised four boroughs. Marylebone comprised nine boroughs, and there were many other divisions in London comprising seven boroughs. There was no identity of interest between many parts of these large divisions. But this Bill was for the alteration of the areas, and declared that the present divisions were to be abolished and new divisions created. It would, therefore, be quite within the principle of the Bill to retain cumulative voting. In 1891 he himself introduced a Bill to lessen the School Board areas and retain the cumulative vote in a modified form. At present, in some of the divisions, seven votes could be cumulated, but under his Bill, which was approved by the Government of the day, the highest cumulative vote was four, and the lowest two. Still the principle of cumulative voting was maintained, and it was done by grouping two or three boroughs, instead of seven and nine. Owing to the exigencies of legislative business at the end of the Session, his Bill was not passed. He was so disappointed that he had not introduced the Bill since. By a schedule and an alteration of the fourth Clause, the Bill now before the House could be amended to meet the views of the right hon. Member for London University, and while reducing the electoral areas, retaining the cumulative vote. In Marylebone there were 90,000 Parliamentary voters, but he presumed there were even a greater number of School Board voters. A new register of ratepayers had to be prepared for every School Board Election, and no heed was paid to the County Council or Parliamentary registers, although prepared at enormous expense. An Amendment to the effect that the County Council register should be the School Board register might with advantage be accepted. The London School Board had suggested a schedule which proposed to retain the same number of members—55—distributed in fours, threes, and twos over groups of two and three boroughs only. He was satisfied that if an hon. Member were called upon to fight nine boroughs he would hesitate at the expense. His first election cost him £600, and it was not good enough to spend so much to get on the School Board. In consequence of the large areas, they had to take those candidates who were willing to do the work of the Board, but who did not much care whether they were elected or not.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said that the speech of the hon. Member for Shoreditch must have opened the eyes of hon. Members opposite to the real character of the Bill. It was very surprising to find such a proposal emanating from the Conservative side of the House. When reading the Bill, he had such serious misgivings as to the political latitude and longitude of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill that he consulted the volume they had for their information as to whether he was there described as a Conservative, and he found he was so described. This proposal hardly harmonised with the character. Certainly the result of such a Bill as this would be that in all districts in the country where School Boards were in most active operation, the Conservative Party would immediately lose in representation. The result of the operation of the Bill would be disastrous to the Catholics in London, who were at present paying heavily for their religious opinions. They were under religious disqualifications or religious disadvantages of a pecuniary kind simply and solely because they were Catholics. There were in the Metropolis 11 districts in which members were elected. Each of those districts had some four or five representatives. Under the cumulative system of voting, the Catholic voters could concentrate their suffrages upon one or more candidates, with the result that now and again they could return a member who fully represented them, and in the great majority of cases they were able to exercise such electoral pressure that a very considerable section of the members of the School Board were only too glad to come to some kind of terms with the Catholic interest. But if each of the existing areas were divided into two or three portions, and if, instead of having power to cumulate four or five votes upon any particular candidate of choice, Catholics had only two votes to use cumulatively, their electoral power would be diminished 50 per cent. Though the cumulative vote system might be retained under the new division of areas, the effective force of the Catholic voters would be entirely dissipated. He trusted that before the House came to a decision upon the Bill, they would give full consideration to the hardships under which Catholics now suffered, and to the hardships still more grievous under which they would suffer if the Bill passed. The Government would have the determining voice in this matter, and therefore, especially in view of the loyal and consistent support in educational matters which he and his hon. Friends had given them, he could fairly appeal to them to protect the Catholic interest in this matter. If the Government should fail them, he trusted that those energies which had for some time been dormant might possibly with some justice be roused into renewed activity.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall) said that the Bill would put an end to proportional representation in School Board elections, and on that ground he could not support it. Upon consideration hon.

Members must admit that on the whole the system of proportional or cumulative voting had answered exceedingly well. It had prevented, especially in the large towns, minorities from being entirely excluded from representation, with the result that, on the whole, there had been very harmonious working. The hon. and gallant Member for Greenwich told them they might vote for the Second Reading, and then introduce clauses which would alter its character. He ventured to think the hon. Member's gallantry had overcome his learning in giving that advice, for it was very doubtful whether the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees would permit such an Amendment. Not only would an injury be done to the Catholics and other religious bodies, but the elections for the School Boards would practically be converted into political elections. This would be very undesirable in the interests of education.

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said that if the Bill had been one for revising the present divisions of London and for preserving in each division some method of securing proportional representation, much might have been said for it. But the Bill was not of that character, nor could it be so transformed. It was a Bill for dividing London into single Member districts, with the exception of the City; and the only method of election which could prevail was that followed when one Member only was to be elected. Cumulative voting was out of the question. The proposed change was a very large one if London alone were considered; but it was still larger if the whole country was taken into account; and it would be impossible to have the School Board in London elected under one system while the Boards of other large towns were elected under another system. The change would prejudicially affect not only the Roman Catholics—who under the cumulative system were able to return some members of their own communion, and powerfully to influence the elections of others—but also members of the Church of England, Secularists, Jews, and Nonconformists. In many a country parish it was the cumulative system which secured the presence of a Nonconformist on the School Board; and in Welsh parishes that system often prevented the entire Board from being exclusively composed of Nonconformists. If a variety of interests were to be represented on the School Board, and the different sections of the community were to be brought into play in the dispatch of School Board business, the present principle of election must be retained. The hon. Member for Shoreditch would not have the composition of the School Board in any degree affected by the religious opinions of the different sections of the electorate. He would not have any representation of the different sections of educational thought on the School Board. What the hon. Member would have was a great struggle over the question whether the School Board should be wholly denominational or wholly undenominational. He altogether denied the position taken up by the hon. Member for Shoreditch—that the problem of education could be considered without reference to those questions which the hon. Member wished to put aside. During the present Session Parliament had been engaged on Bills the whole principle of which was the recognition that religious education, in the minds of a considerable portion of the people, was so essential that it must be maintained. What narrowness of view, then, it was to suggest, as did the hon. Member for Shoreditch, that his particular definition of education could be imposed on the rest of the world. The hon. Member would not allow other people to have any influence on primary education unless they put aside altogether opinions which the hon. Member did not share. Society was not so constituted that these particular elements could be dispensed with. The work of education could not be efficiently discharged unless the diversity of interests was properly represented. This was not an opinion nursed in the closet—the mere dream of the philosopher or the man with a hobby. Eleven years ago a strong Select Committee was appointed to inquire into the subject. They examined the Vice President of the Council—the man who brought in the Education Act of 1870—and he said that that Act could not have worked without the cumulative system. Lord Sandford, long the permanent Secretary of the Education Department, said the same; and witnesses from all the big towns actually interested in School Board work declared that they could not have carried out the work imposed by the Education Act without the co-operation on the School Boards of members of different views and religious convictions. No doubt it was very pleasant for the hon. Member for Dulwich to reflect on the character of the Parliamentary representation of London under a system of single-member constituencies. But would the hon. Member assert that the Parliamentary representation of London at the present moment corresponded to the division of political opinion among the electors? It was notoriously not so. The London County Council was elected under a single-member system; and the constitution of that body showed at one time an enormous overplus of Progressives and at another time almost an equality, although the number of Progressive voters was the same in both cases. The electorate would not necessarily be at all truly reflected in the body elected under this Bill, as was shown by experience both in large and small areas. For example, twice in its Parliamentary history Leeds, as at present constituted, had had a majority of voters one way and a majority of members the other way. If this were a question of simply cutting down the present School Board areas something might be said for it, but, even looked at from that point of view, he did not think the proposal was one which should be accepted by the House. It was not always a disadvantage to have a large area to appeal to. It was not desirable that every area should be canvassed. It was far better to use the resources of civilisation in the way of distributing leaflets in order to bring a candidate's views before the electors than to conduct a house-to-house canvass. The experience of the School Board for London itself showed how powerful the present large areas, coupled with the system of cumulative voting, were in securing the representation of comparatively small minorities and the presence on the Board of persons of different classes. The result was that, whatever might be the defects of the London School Board, it had maintained much the same policy for the past 25 years, and there had been a continuity of action on the part of the Board which would not have happened had the Board been elected by the methods proposed in the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) said there was not much time left for him to state the views of the Committee of Council on Education in regard to the Bill—[*laughter*]—but he would state those views in a very few words. The Committee regarded the Bill not merely as a Bill to alter the boundaries of the districts by which the School Board for London was elected, but a Bill for the abolition of cumulative voting. The Committee of Council on Education had the same opinion now in regard to cumulative voting that they had had in the days of Mr. Forster, Lord Sandford, and Sir Patrick Cuming. The experience of the past 25 years was that the Education Act could not have been so well worked, if, indeed, it had been worked at all, were it not for the protection that cumulative voting gave to minorities. ["Hear, hear!"] He would not be led into a discussion on the representation of minorities, and would express no opinion as to whether the method of election adopted in the Education Act was the most philosophic method that could be conceived; but at any rate it was one that was now in existence, and it was not one that the Education Department could recommend Parliament to alter. The opinion of all educational authorities and experts had been in favour of some method by which minorities could find their way on the School Boards, and, so far from agreeing with what had been said by the hon. Member for Shoreditch, that the abolition of cumulative voting would put an end to party spirit, he was afraid that if the Bill were passed, School Board elections would become purely party elections. ["Hear, hear!"] It was a significant circumstance, stated by the right hon. Gentleman in moving the Second Reading, that all the Radical political associations and all the Conservative political associations were in favour of the Bill. To his mind that consensus of opinion on the part of the political associations on both sides was the strongest possible condemnation of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] Nothing could be more unfortunate than that the School Boards should be made arenas for political discussion. [*A laugh on the Opposition side.*] He supposed the hon. Member who laughed cared a great deal more for party than for education. [*Cheers.*] Already, as things were, party spirit prevailed a great deal too much in the discussion of education questions, and he was sure that if they made the School Boards, instead of what they were now in a great majority of cases, bodies where men of all parties, men of all religions, men of the most divergent views on questions of State policy, could act together for the benefit of education—if they were to turn the School Boards into mere party bodies, the interests of education would seriously suffer. Therefore, while the present system might be unpractical and unphilosophic in some respects, it secured on the School Boards the presence of non-party, non-denominational, and non-sectarian elements, and for that reason the Committee of Council on Education would view the abolition of cumulative voting with very great regret. [*Cheers.*]

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 80; Noes, 127.—(Division List, No. 188.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 27th May.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MARINERS' VOTES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

POOR LAW FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 27th May.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (24th February) further adjourned till To-morrow.

PRISON MADE GOODS (IMPORTATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 26th May.

ALIENS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 26th May.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

RESTRAINT OF EVICTIONS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 18th May.

REGISTRATION OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 12th May.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

LAND TENURE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 28th May.

COUNTY SECRETARIES SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 27th May.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 27th May.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. (17th February) further adjourned till To-morrow.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL [H.L.].

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 26th May.

POLICE PENSIONS AND SERVICE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 21st May.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 20th May.

TENANT RIGHT IN TOWNS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 28th May.

LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 21st May.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 28th May.

SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 20th May.

ELECTION PETITIONS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 13th May.

MERSEY CHANNELS BILL.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

BAKEHOUSES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

LONDON WATER COMPANIES AMALGAMATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 28th May.

BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Second Reading (7th April) further adjourned till Friday, 28th May.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 21st May.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 21st May.

VERMINOUS PERSONS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Clause 1:—

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SALE OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTION.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT NO. 2.

Bill to amend certain provisions of the Local Government Act 1894, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Henry Hobhouse and Mr. Hare; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 12th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 209.]

WAYS AND MEANS (BUDGET).

On the Question "That the House do now adjourn,"

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked whether the Budget was to be the first Order on the following day?

Sir W. WALROND (Devon, Tiverton) said the Budget would be the first Order. The Motion which had been upon the Paper had been withdrawn for to-morrow.

Mr. KNOX asked whether the Motion could be moved on going into Committee of Ways and Means on Thursday?

Sir W. WALROND: Yes.

House Adjourned at a Quarter before Six o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 29th April 1897.

QUESTIONS.

BETTING "PLACES" (HAWKE v. DUNN).

MR. HUBERT DUNCOMBE (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will introduce a short Bill defining a "place" under the Betting Acts, 1853 and 1854, in intelligible and unmistakable words, and in accordance with the expressed intentions of the framers of the aforesaid Acts?

The HON. MEMBER also asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention had been called to the fact that, under the recent Judgment in the case of Hawke *v.* Dunn, any defined or undefined area may be converted into a place within the meaning of the Betting Houses Acts, should one man make, or offer to make, bets there as a matter of business; and whether, having regard to the impossibility of insuring that among a large assembly of spectators no one will bet or endeavour to bet as a matter of business, the Government will take steps to so amend the law as to enable Her Majesty's subjects to witness sports and games without the risk of finding themselves arrested, searched, and locked up?

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of Mr. Justice Hawkins, in giving the Judgment of the Divisional Court in the case of Hawke *v.* Dunn, that he and his learned brethren were giving effect to what they believed to be the object and intention of the Legislature in passing the Betting Acts of 1853 and 1854; (2) whether he is now in a position to state what is the effect of that judgment; and what directions in consequence of it have been given to the police; and (3) whether, considering the crime and misery which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Judges, has ensued upon the rapid increase of public professional gambling, and especially that carried on by starting or tape price bookmakers, he can hold out any hope of being able to propose legislation which, while not interfering with legitimate sport, would check and mitigate the admitted evil?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I will answer the two Questions of the hon. Member and that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Honiton Division of Devon at the same time. I am not prepared to suggest legislation in either of the directions proposed by the hon. Member. He appears to me, in the second of his Questions, to take an exaggerated view of the effect of the decision in the case Hawke *v.* Dunn, and I do not think that Her Majesty's subjects will be in any such danger as the hon. Member represents, or that any further legislation is necessary for their protection. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that I am advised by the Law Officers that the Judgment applies to all kinds of betting, betting on credit as well as betting for ready money, and that the Metropolitan Police, the only force directly under my control, have instructions to take proceedings against bookmakers and others who can be proved to have infringed the provisions of Section 1 of the Act of 1853. Several summonses are, in fact, now pending. As regards the evil to which he refers in the last paragraph of his Question, I am fully alive to its gravity, and, though I cannot promise anything definitely, it shall not escape my attention. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. DUNCOMBE: May I ask whether this House is in any danger of being held to be a "place" within the meaning of the Betting Acts? [*Laughter.*]

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: That is a question that should be addressed to the Law Officers of the Crown. ["Hear, hear!"]

POST OFFICE GRIEVANCES.

MR. DUNCOMBE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will assent to the appointment of a Select Committee of this House to inquire into the grievances and causes of discontent amongst the major establishment of the Post Office, especially as to promotion?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): There is no information at the Post Office as to the existence of the grievances and causes of discontent referred to by the hon. Member. The great bulk of the major establishment—by which I presume is meant the clerical establishment—consists of officers of the first and second divisions who enter the service on terms common to the other Departments, and the conditions of their service were dealt with by a Royal Commission only a few years ago. If anything, the conditions of the Second Division are more favourable in a rapidly-growing Department like the Post Office than in others, and promotion is more rapid. Perhaps the hon. Member will explain to me privately what are the precise grounds of the alleged complaints, and I shall then be in a better position to judge how far any further inquiry is necessary.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the library of the Edinburgh University is in a neglected condition, and that the busts of Royal Princes and other distinguished personages are in a discreditable state; and whether he will call upon the University Council to put the library in proper order?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): If the hon. Member alludes to the condition and numbers of the books in the library, they are preserved and added to as well as the funds at command of the University for the purpose will allow. The other matters referred to by the hon. Member will receive attention when funds are available for the purpose.

METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAYS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the inability of the Board of Trade to prevent overcrowding in the carriages of the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, he will consider the advisability of seeking powers in regard to railway carriages similar to those which he now possesses in the case of public conveyances in streets carrying more passengers than they are authorised to hold?

*SIR MATTHEY WHITE RIDLEY: I am afraid the matter is not one which comes within my jurisdiction.

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of persons in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, respectively, licensed to practise vivisection, and how many of them hold certificates to dispense with anæsthetics?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The number of persons licensed at the present time in England is 145, in Scotland 52, in Wales one; the number holding the certificate dispensing with anæsthetics is, in England 86, in Scotland 30, in Wales none. The only figures in my possession as regards Ireland are those for 1895; in that year the number of licensees was six, of whom one held a certificate dispensing with anæsthetics. In giving the hon. Member these figures I may remind him that the certificate in question is never given for operations involving serious pain, but only for such operations as inoculations or hypodermic injections.

ARMY QUARTERS (REMOVAL).

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield Central): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can inform the House of the cost of moving the furniture of officers' and sergeants' messes and quarters, and also of married soldiers' quarters, regimental libraries, etc., from station to station within the United Kingdom last year; and if the Secretary of State will consider whether a saving could be effected by furnishing such messes and quarters, and charging the occupants a rental, instead of carting about so much furniture, and cause an inquiry to be made if such a change would conduce to the comfort of officers, sergeants, and soldiers, and add materially to the mobility of the Army?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): Sergeants' messes and the quarters of married soldiers are already furnished to a considerable extent; and the libraries belong to garrisons and not to regiments. As regards officers, the heavier furniture of mess-rooms and quarters is already provided by the public, so that when a regiment moves it is only the lighter furniture, with the plate, crockery, glass, and bedding which accompanies it, the bulk of the cost incurred being for the personal baggage of the officers and men. A few years ago a Committee considered the question of supplying, at the public expense, such articles of furniture or equipment as are not now so supplied; and they found that while the capital outlay would be nearly a quarter of a million, the cost of transport saved would give a most inadequate return. It is doubtful whether an uniform mess equipment would give general satisfaction.

WATERSHEDS.

Mr. WALTER HAZELL (Leicester): On behalf of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. H. Broadhurst), I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will consider the desirability of taking such action as may be necessary to prevent any one local authority monopolising the sources of water supply from the great watershed of the country, in order to insure equal opportunity for all communities to avail themselves of a share in this great and natural necessity of the people?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I am not aware that any local authority is seeking to monopolise the sources of water supply from the great watershed of the country, nor am I quite clear as to what watershed it is that the hon. Member refers to, but such a scheme as that referred to would require express Parliamentary powers, and I have no doubt that Parliament would give any such scheme very careful consideration before assenting to it, and would have due regard to the interests of communities other than those of the authority by whom it was proposed that the water supply should be appropriated.

MUZZLING DOGS.

Mr. DUNCOMBE: On behalf of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. A. Drucker) I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware of the fact that the majority of local bodies have not adopted the system of muzzling dogs recommended by the Departmental Committee, and also that many recognised authorities are against such compulsory muzzling; whether the said Committee took steps to ascertain the views of well-known breeders before making their Report; and if, considering the fact that muzzling entails serious inconvenience upon the owners of dogs and grave injury to the health of the animals, he will facilitate further inquiry?

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Walter Long, Liverpool, West Derby): I find it somewhat difficult to understand what my hon. Friend means by his first Question, inasmuch as the Departmental Committee recommended that muzzling orders should be made in future not by local, but by the central, authorities. I am aware of course that compulsory muzzling does not commend itself to everyone, but the question was fully discussed from all points of view before the Committee, who also took evidence from breeders. This being the case, I cannot assent to the suggestion that further inquiry is necessary.

WATER SUPPLY (LONDON).

Mr. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state to the House the names of the Members who will form the Royal Commission on the Water Supply of London?

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now give the names of those who will compose the Royal Commission to inquire into the question of the purchase and regulation of the London Water Companies; and when it is his intention to introduce the Bill for strengthening and improving the position of water consumers in the Metropolis?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The names of the Members of the Royal Commission on the Water Supply of London are as follows: The Right Hon. Lord Llandaff, chairman; the Right Hon. J. W. Mellor, M.P., Sir

John Dorington, M.P., Sir G. B. Bruce, C.E., Major-General A. de Courcy Scott, R.E., Mr. A. de Bock Porter, C.B., Mr. H. W. Cripps, Q.C., and Mr. Robert Lewis. I may add, with reference to the Question of my hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea, that I hope to bring in a Bill dealing with the water question as soon as I see any prospect of making progress with the Measure.

MR. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, in view of his promise to introduce a Measure this Session for the purpose of strengthening and improving the position of the water consumers of the Metropolis, whether he is aware that the East London Waterworks Company have introduced a new condition in their latest demand notes, namely, that it will be unlawful to use water in the future for garden use except through meters; whether in his promised Measure he will make provision protecting the consumers against this prohibition of the use of water in gardens; and, if he is aware that the Company in question have admitted that no reliable water meter has yet been invented?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am informed by the Company that, owing to the excessive use and waste of water by reason of garden hose and other apparatus being employed and frequently left running day and night, the directors have given notice for determining the arrangements entered into for garden supply. The fixed charge has been abolished, and the supply for garden purposes will be furnished through meters. I must defer any statement as to the provisions of the proposed Measure until it is introduced by me. As regards the last Question, the comapny state that they are not aware that they have ever "admitted that no reliable meter has yet been invented." They also state that it is physically impossible for more water to be registered than passes through the meter, although it may happen that the whole of the water passing through the meter is not registered.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (MORAY FIRTH).

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether his attention has been called to the fishing depredations of foreign trawlers in the Moray Firth, and the proceedings which occurred in Aberdeen last Friday, when one of the trawlers in question attempted to land its cargo; (2) whether it is lawful for trawlers of foreign Powers to visit fishing grounds on our coast, which, in the interest of the fishing industry, have been closed to all trawlers of our own country; and (3) whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The answer to the first paragraph of the hon. and gallant Member's Question is in the affirmative. As regards the remainder of his Question, as action has been taken in the Court of Session by the master of the trawler in question against the fishery authorities and myself, and the whole proceedings will consequently be submitted to judicial decision, I do not think it advisable to give any opinion in the matter.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) whether he is aware that on Friday last the German trawler *Alster* attempted to land at Aberdeen fish caught within the prescribed limit in the Moray Firth, and was only prevented from so doing by a detachment of bluejackets and marines; and (2) whether, if the law of Scotland provides no effective civil means for enforcing the legal prohibition of the landing of such fish, he will consider the propriety of remedying the defect?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The landing of the fish referred to in the first paragraph of the Question was prevented by the crew of H.M.S. *Jackal*, which, as the hon. Member is aware, is at the orders of the Fishery Board, and employed in the execution of the Fishery Acts. This employment is strictly in terms of the 8th Section of the Herring Fishery Act of 1889, under which action was taken. If the crew of the *Jackal* had not been available I do not doubt that other and civil aid might have been made available; and I consequently am unable to see any defect in the law which requires remedy.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES.

GENERAL RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, as it is announced that no Manœuvre Bill will be introduced this Session, and as the ground to be acquired on Salisbury Plain is not yet available, and as he has informed the House that manœuvres are absolutely essential to secure efficiency, he will state what description of exercise it is proposed to give the troops in this country this season?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I can only answer that the military authorities propose to give the troops the best tactical exercises which the nature of the ground at their disposal will allow.

GENERAL RUSSELL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to bring in any Measure dealing with the subject this Session?

*MR. BRODRICK said that the hon. and gallant Gentleman must be perfectly aware that the authorities at the War Office were earnestly desirous of such a Measure as he indicated being passed, but that the state of public business would not allow it to be done.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether legislation will be proposed this Session, or early next Session, to enable those large manœuvres to take place in 1898, which both the Commander-in-Chief and the Government have declared to be important for the efficiency of the Army; and whether a Manœuvres Bill will be put before the Reserve Forces Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Government fully recognise that the provision already made as to a large manœuvring ground on Salisbury Plain does not really exhaust all the necessities of the case, though it goes some way towards it. In these circumstances we hope to introduce a Manœuvres Bill which shall meet with general approval in all quarters of the House.

LAND COMMISSION.

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the large number of applications for the fixing of fair rents in the County Mayo, he will direct an immediate sitting of the Land Commission for that purpose?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): A list of cases from the County Mayo has only recently been disposed of; a further list containing cases from the Unions of Ballina, Killala, Belmullet, and Westport has been prepared, and will shortly be issued, and the cases on this list will, I hope, shortly be disposed of. The Executive have no power to give the direction mentioned.

CARLOWAY ROAD (LEWIS).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the road between Carloway and Stornoway, island of Lewis, initiated by the last Conservative Government, remains unfinished in consequence of the original grant being insufficient; and whether arrangements will be made to provide the sum required for the completion of the road?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: No arrangements can at present be made in regard to the road in question.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS (SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY).

MR. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, whereas in certain public departments a half-holiday is granted every Saturday, in others the half-holiday is on alternate Saturdays only; whether there is any regulation precluding these latter departments from granting a regular weekly half-holiday; and whether he will take steps to procure uniformity of practice in this respect throughout the service by authorising a general Saturday half-holiday?

MR. HANBURY: The rule laid down by the two great Orders in Council of 1890 for the higher and second divisions is that—

> "Officers who are required to attend seven hours a day shall be allowed a half-holiday on alternate Saturdays, provided that the heads of the Departments in which such officers are serving are satisfied that the state of public business will permit."

This rule does not debar heads of Departments from granting in their discretion occasional half-holidays at other times if the state of the work admits. The Treasury would be very unwilling to interfere with the exercise of this discretion. To modify the Orders in Council by substituting a general weekly half-holiday for the present conditional fortnightly one, would in many Departments not only seriously delay public business, but also necessitate increases of staff to deal with the work now done on Saturdays, and, therefore, the discretionary system now in force appears to be best adapted to the conditions of the Service.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Hon. G. H. Reid, Premier of New South Wales, has stated that subjects of vast importance to the Colonies and the Empire would be discussed during the visit of the Colonial Premiers to London; and whether this statement is correct; and, if so, whether there is any objection to specifying the subjects referred to?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have not seen the statement referred to. As regards the last part of the hon. Member's Question, I can only refer him to the answer given to the Question addressed to me by him on March 29. I then stated that there was no intention to hold anything in the nature of a formal Conference, but, of course, we shall be most happy to discuss, either as a whole or in an individual capacity, any question that may be raised.

MR. HARRY FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any of the Irish Militia will be employed in London upon the public celebration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, as well as English and Scotch Militia?

*MR. BRODRICK: The arrangements are not yet definitely settled, but it is proposed that the Irish Militia shall be represented at the Jubilee.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (GLASGOW).

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can now give an answer to the repeated demands by the Corporation of Glasgow and others for fresh telephone licences; and whether, in view of the number of such demands, and the confusion in the telephone service which might arise from granting them, he will consider the advisability of taking advantage of the break which occurs in the existing licences in the present year, and thus by purchase concentrate the sole control and working of the telephones in the Post Office Department.

MR. HANBURY: The Government are willing to agree to a public Inquiry, not conducted by officials of the Post Office, into the complaints made by the Corporation of Glasgow with reference to the existing telephone service, including in such Inquiry the grounds upon which the Corporation decline to allow the National Telephone Company the privilege of taking up the roadways for laying their wires. The Government have definitely decided not to purchase from the National Telephone Company, as suggested in the Question.

MR. BEGG asked what would be the constitution of the proposed Inquiry?

MR. HANBURY: It will be carried on either by a barrister or an expert.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Has the Corporation of Glasgow asked for an Inquiry?

MR. HANBURY: No; but I think in view of the complaints of the Corporation of Glasgow against the National Telephone Company, it is only fair, if they insist on those complaints, that an Inquiry should be held.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the amount of £11,971, stated in the Return [C. 8422] as the sum to which West Ham (Borough) will be entitled under the Poor School Boards Bill is approximately correct; and if not, could he state what is the approximate amount which West Ham will receive under the Bill?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): The amount payable to West Ham is correctly stated for the period and on the assumptions mentioned in the Return. The Education Department have at present no later or more accurate information.

POSTMEN (CARDIFF).

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, on what scale of pay the Cardiff postmen are to be placed?

Mr. HANBURY: The Cardiff Town postmen have been placed on the scale of 18s. rising by 1s. 6d. to 28s. a week. The scale prior to 1st April was 17s. rising by 1s. to 28s.

BRITISH STEAMER STOPPED AT SYRA.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a weekly steamer sailing under the English flag, laden with flour and bound for Canea, has been stopped at Syra?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): The British steamer *Triton* was stopped at Syra by the Greek authorities as mentioned in the Question, but was subsequently allowed to proceed to her destination.

IMMIGRANTS (EAST LONDON).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the clearances recently effected in the East End of London by owners of house property, who find it to their pecuniary interest to take in large numbers of German, Polish, and Russian immigrants, whose habits and sanitary notions are not always of the highest; and whether he will take steps to secure that the local authorities shall put in force the powers they possess in respect of sanitary requirements?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I understand that certain clearances are taking place in the neighbourhood referred to, with a view, in some cases, to the renovation or rebuilding of the tenements, but I have no information as to whether the object aimed at is the substitution of foreign immigrants for the existing tenants. The local authority assure me that they have hitherto put in force, and will continue to put in force, the sanitary powers which they possess.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, under the accelerated mail system between Dublin and Cork, the morning mail will reach Maryborough before 8.0 a.m.; and, whether arrangements could be made to deliver from Maryborough on the same day letters and newspapers at Ballyfin, which is within little more than an hour's walk?

Mr. HANBURY: The day mail train from Dublin will, on and after the 1st May, be due at Maryborough slightly before 8 a.m. As the hon. Member has already been informed, the post to and from Ballyfin works through Mountrath (not Maryborough) in connection with the night mail trains, and as the present service is performed at a loss to the revenue, a second post in the day would not be justified. Enquiry is, however, being made at Ballyfin in order to ascertain whether the residents generally would prefer the post to work in connection with the day mail instead of the night mail trains. Little advantage, if any, would, however, be gained by serving Ballyfin through Maryborough instead of through Mountrath, and as such an arrangement would be more expensive it will probably not be considered expedient to change the post town.

THAMES CONSERVANCY BYE-LAWS.

Mr. S. WOODS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the proposed bye-law of the Thames Conservancy dealing with the manning of craft makes no provision for the manning according to tonnage of empty craft; and, whether the Board of Trade propose to alter such bye-law so as to include empty craft?

The hon. Member further asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he was aware that the new proposed bye-laws for the navigation of the River

Thames, made by the Thames Conservancy, contain no provision for the barges on the Thames being supplied with proper gear or life-saving apparatus; and, whether the Board of Trade propose to insist on the insertion of regulations dealing with this subject?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): The Conservators of the River Thames have lately submitted bye-laws to the Board of Trade for confirmation, but the time for making objections not having expired, the bye-laws have not yet been considered by the Board. I am, therefore, not able at the present moment to state what action the Board of Trade will take as regards the points raised in the Questions of the hon. Member, but I will take care that any objections or representations which may be made to the Board within the time fixed by the Act shall receive careful consideration.

TRANSVAAL (JAMESON RAID).

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, since informing the South African Republic on 25th June 1896, in reply to a demand from that Republic that Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Beit, and Mr. Rutherford Harris should be placed on their trial for their complicity in the attempted insurrection at Johannesburg, but that Her Majesty's Government could only act in this matter upon the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown and in accordance with the principles of English law, the Law Officers of the Crown have been consulted; and if so, with what result?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: A Committee of this House is now sitting to inquire into all matters connected with the raid, and pending their Report it would be premature to consider the question of proceedings.

CRETE.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether his attention has been drawn to the proclamation issued by the acting Governor General of Crete, to the effect that all Greek subjects should leave the island within 15 days; (2) whether Ismail Bey drew up an Order re-establishing the censorship of Press telegrams, but that it was withdrawn owing to the strong protest of correspondents at Canea; (3) and whether under the present conditions of the blockade and occupation of the island by the Great Powers, it is competent for any such orders to be issued by the Turkish Governor, affecting the areas under the protection of the Powers.

MR. CURZON: The attention of Her Majesty's Government was drawn to the proclamation; but, it having been agreed by the Powers that Crete, being placed under their immediate protection, must be regarded as neutral territory, Her Majesty's Government signified their opinion that the notice given by the Acting Governor General should not take effect. Her Majesty's Consul reported that he had communicated in the above sense with the Acting Governor General, who had telegraphed to the Porte for instructions, and had in the meanwhile ordered the Governors of Candia and Rethymo not to enforce the expulsion till further orders. In answer to the second paragraph, we have no information as to the censorship of Press telegrams.

MR. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the prohibition against landing provisions for the Cretan insurgents in Crete is still in force; and, if so, whether the prohibition extends equally to the Turkish and Greek forces in that island.

MR. CURZON: The prohibition is still in force, but, as I stated in reply to a Question in this House on the 27th instant, it is for the Admirals to decide on the exact method of its application. Our information is to the effect that in the interior there is no scarcity of food, whereas, the Turkish forces being confined to the ports are naturally dependent for provisions on supplies coming by sea, and are in some cases threatened with famine. It should be remembered that the Turkish forces are in the island with the consent of the Powers, and are solely acting for the maintenance of order and the defence of the Cretan Mussulman population, while the Greek troops are there against the express demand of the Powers for their withdrawal, and are believed to be supporting and encouraging the insurgents in their attacks.

*SIR C. DILKE: Would the right hon. Gentleman state under the circumstances as regards food blockade described by him, what is the reason for the maintenance of the food blockade?

MR. CURZON: Oh! the blockade, as the right hon. Baronet knows perfectly well, does not extend only to food, but is directed in the main, of course, against the introduction of munitions of war into the island.

*SIR C. DILKE: But, as I understand it, there is a blockade of food?

MR. CURZON: The blockade, of course, applies to all imports into the island that are likely to produce a continuation of disturbance. (*Cries of "Oh" and much laughter.*)

TURCO-GREEK WAR.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the assertions now being publicly made that the German Government has been supplying the Turks with munitions of war since the declaration of war by Turkey against Greece; whether he is able to state if these assertions are true; and, if so, whether such conduct is in conformity with the rules of International Law recognised by all States that claim to be civilised; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will protest to the German Government against the continuance of this conduct?

MR CURZON: No such information has reached Her Majesty's Government, and they do not attach any credence to the report.

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is the fact that German Officers are at present serving in the Turkish Army, and whether it would be equally competent for English Officers to serve in the Greek Army?

*MR. BRODRICK: The Secretary of State has no information as to foreign officers serving in either the Turkish or Greek Army; but under the Foreign Enlistment Act every subject of the Queen is prohibited from taking service in the military or naval forces of a State at war with another State with which this country is at peace, unless he have Her Majesty's licence to do so.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware under those circumstances that the Government is prepared and is about to tak action against those persons who, a announced in the public papers, are enlisting in the service of the Greeks?

*MR. BRODRICK: So far as I know, the Government have no official knowledge of any persons having so enlisted.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiry?

*MR. BRODRICK: That Question should be addressed to the Foreign Office.

MR. D. H. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had received any applications for active service with the Greek forces from the 100 Members of the House who had signed the memorial to the King of Greece. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers and laughter.*]

[No answer was given.]

TOKAT MASSACRE.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have received information supplied by Her Majesty's Consul at Tokat to the effect that the survivors of the recent massacre there are in peril of their lives, and that, in the Consul's opinion, there will be a renewal of the massacre; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table of the House any Reports received from Vice Consul Bulman, or supplied by him to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople?

MR. CURZON: In a telegram addressed to Sir Philip Currie some weeks ago by her Majesty's Vice Consul at Tokat, he expressed his fears of a renewal of disorders. In a Dispatch dated the 14th inst., the Vice Consul reports the Turkish population as in a general state of ferment, and that the Armenians seem convinced that the disorders will continue, and are decided to use every effort to emigrate. The steps that have since been taken by the Turkish Government are, however, of a nature to discourage any recurrence of the massacres. The Papers will be laid in due course with other Reports on Asiatic Turkey.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND (REPORT).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state why the Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, which is dated October 1896, has only just been issued?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The delay in issuing the Report this year was largely due to the fact that the audit clauses of the Act of 1894, having come into operation during the year, the figures for the tables in the appendix were not procurable till the audit was completed. As was to be expected in the first year, there was some delay in having the audit carried through. It is not anticipated that similar delay will occur in future.

POST OFFICE FACILITIES (LEWIS).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that in the parish of Lochs, Island of Lewis, with a population of 5,000, there is no office open for the transaction of money order and savings bank business; and that, if the people of the district wish to cash a postal order or obtain a money order they have to travel to and from Stornoway, a journey of from 20 to 30 miles; and whether, in the circumstances, he will consider the advisability of establishing a money order office at one of the post offices in the Lochs district?

MR. HANBURY: As the hon. Member is, of course, aware, the District Committee of the County Council is empowered to enter into a guarantee for both telegraphic facilities and the extension of money order and savings banks business. The extension of telegraphic facilities carries with it the extension of the other facilities named, and the proposal of the hon. Member to deal with only one of them is not I think the most practical method. The question of extending these various facilities is one which should be treated as a whole, and from that point of view consideration shall be given to the claims of the district mentioned by the hon. Member.

POST OFFICE (DUBLIN).

MR. HARRY FOSTER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the post of Examiner in the Dublin Post Office has lately been given to an officer in the Controller and Accountant General's Department, General Post Office, London, over the heads of nearly 50 seniors; and could he explain in what respects all those passed over were considered unqualified for the post?

MR. HANBURY: The post of Examiner in the Dublin Post Office has lately been given to an officer in the Accountant General's Office in London. Of three vacant staff appointments in the Accountant's Office in Dublin, two were filled up by promotion of gentlemen within that office; but for the post of Examiner, the Postmaster General, much to his regret, was obliged to resort to another office, and he selected an officer from the Accountant General's Department in London, who was specially qualified for the discharge of the important duties to be performed. There were above him in that department nearly 50 officers whose salary was less than that of the vacant post in Dublin; but he was selected as the best qualified of those who were willing to undertake the duties. Not one of the officers in question stood in succession to the appointment or had any claim to it. In the judgment of the Postmaster General none of the officers in the Post Office at Dublin were qualified for the positon of Examiner; but his Grace does not consider it desirable to give a detailed explanation respecting each officer.

POSTAL FACILITIES (RUSHDEN, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE).

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that on granting the additional postal facilities to Rushden, Northamptonshire, it was made a condition that the assistant clerk whose employment was necessitated by the increased work should have a good knowledge of geography and a capacity for general sorting, but should only have a salary of 10s. a week; could he state what are the other salaries paid in the Rushden Post Office, and whether the salaries are lower than the scale of salaries in towns of similar population and postal work in the neighbourhood; and whether he will consider the desirability of increasing this salary?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General, in granting additional facilities at Rushden, did not lay down the condition in question. The assistant at the Rushden Post Office to whom the hon. Member refers is provided for under an allowance to the Sub-Postmaster, who appears to have thought it desirable in seeking for a suitable person to fill the vacancy to stipulate that the candidate should have a good knowledge of geography. The other clerks in the Rushden office are established officers of the Department, one, a man, on scale of pay ranging from 12s. to 34s. a week, and the other two, women, on a scale ranging from 10s. to 26s. a week, and these scales are not lower than those in force at offices of similar standing. The question whether the circumstances admit of the allowance to the Sub-Postmaster for an assistant being raised shall be considered.

VOLUNTARY AND BOARD SCHOOLS (GRANTS).

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he could state to the House what are the estimated amounts for the year ending 31st March 1898 of the Licence Duties given over in 1889, contribution of half the local rates in rural districts granted in 1896, and the grants to Voluntary and Board Schools made this year, all of which are handed over to local authorities in Great Britain and not in Ireland; and whether there are any, and, if so, what are the amounts of other grants in aid given in one country and not in the other.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): The estimated amount of the licence duties for 1897-98 is £3,620,000. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, the grants in aid of local expenditure borne on the votes are, as shown in the Estimates—Great Britain, £1,347,000; Ireland, £2,010,000. As to the other points on which the hon. Member desires information I will ask him to wait for the statement which I am about to make this afternoon.

DEATH FROM CAT BITE.

Mr. DUNCOMBE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the death of Mr. John Hetch, 60 years of age, who died in the Queen's Hospital, Birmingham, from the effects of a cat's bit; whether he is aware that the medical evidence proved the death to be undoubtedly the result of rabies; and whether he is prepared, either by issuing a universal muzzling order for cats, or otherwise, to guard against the danger thus shown to exist?

*Mr. LONG: Yes; my attention has been directed to the lamentable case to which my hon. Friend refers, which seems undoubtedly to have been one of hydrophobia due to the bite of a cat. I do not think that any direct action against rabies in cats is either practicable or necessary. The information in our possession goes to show that the disease is usually conveyed from dogs to cats, not *vice versâ*, and in fact no cases under the latter head are known to us. If, therefore, we succeed in our efforts to stamp out rabies amongst dogs in this country, the disease is not at all likely to be kept alive by means of cats. I may, perhaps, add for the assurance of owners of cats, that out of 1,075 persons treated for hydrophobia at the Pasteur Institute during the first nine months of 1895, 1,039 had been bitten by dogs and only 36 by cats.

POSTMEN (PROVINCIAL TOWNS).

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is intended that allowances hitherto received by postmen in provincial towns shall in future be regarded as part of the weekly wage, and count towards the maximum pay?

Mr. HANBURY: The hon. Member does not, I assume, refer to allowances for supervision, boots, trip and subsistence allowances or good conduct stripes, nor to merely temporary allowances for temporary work. All others will be abolished as allowances, and will be merged in the new scale of wages. Full regard will, of course, be held to the claims of existing holders of such allowances. They will enter the scale at a point equal to their previous salary and allowances combined, and whenever the maximum of the present scale, together with the allowances, exceed the maximum of the new scale, that, but no further, excess will be granted.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state when the Bill dealing with the grant in aid of congested districts in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland will be introduced?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I cannot at present give the hon. Member any precise information on the subject.

Mr. WEIR: Is there any hope of that Bill being introduced this Session?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Yes; I hope so.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (DIVISIONS).

Mr. DUNCOMBE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of so altering Standing Order No. 30 of the House of Commons as to provide that when, in the opinion of Mr. Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees, a Division is frivolously claimed, and the names of Members challenging the decision of Mr. Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees are taken down, the names of such Members shall not appear in the Division Lists or that the record of such names shall not count as a Division; and whether, if such alteration should not appear to be advisable, he will provide that the names of Members supporting the decision of Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees shall also be recorded?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think that the rule, at all events as at present worked in the House, is certainly unsatisfactory. [*Cheers.*] I cannot promise my hon. Friend to bring forward in the immediate future a new Standing Order remedying the defect which I think has been shown to attach to the working of the Standing Order; but I think that the matter does deserve the attention of the House.

Mr. DUNCOMBE asked Mr. Speaker whether, in view of the words of the Standing Order No. 30, it was correct to interpret that such divisions should be counted as such, or whether it was correct to say that they were not divisions. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]

*Mr. SPEAKER: The Question put by the hon. Member on the Paper called my particular attention to the terms of the Standing Order, and on consideration of them I have come to the conclusion that a vote of the House taken under that Standing Order is not a Division. [*Cheers.*] The Standing Order provides that the Speaker or Chairman, after calling on the Ayes and Noes to rise in their places, shall—

> "either declare the determination of the House or name Tellers for a Division, and, in case there is no Division, shall declare to the House or Committee the number of the minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall be thereupon taken down in the House and printed with the list of Divisions."

The effect appears to me to be that it is a vote of the House, the result of which is declared from the Chair without any Division. It is a technical point, but that, I think, is the effect of the Standing Order. The Standing Order no doubt requires that the names of those who voted in the minority shall be printed with the list of Divisions, but such record ought not to be numbered or reckoned as a Division. [*Cheers.*] I shall give directions that in future the practice of printing it as a Division be discontinued.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT (REPORT).

Mr. HARRY FOSTER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is able to state that an opportunity will be given for discussing the Report of the Tweedmouth Committee upon the position and pay of postmen?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think my hon. Friend will have the opportunity he seeks when the Post Office Vote comes before the House.

SUPPLY (FOREIGN OFFICE VOTE).

Sir W. HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I observe that on Tuesday, in answer to a Question, the First Lord of the Treasury was good enough to say that if there was a desire expressed on this side of the House that the Foreign

Office Vote should be put down at an early date, he would have no objection to the granting of that request. He also mentioned that he had fixed the business for Friday, May 14, but that there were two intervening Fridays before that date. If convenient, therefore, to the Government, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would fix Friday, May 7, for the Foreign Office Vote, so that the discussion might be taken on foreign affairs.

THE **FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY**: Of course the convenience of the Government in such matters is the convenience of the House, and the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman on such a subject necessarily meets with an immediate response from this Bench. I shall therefore regard to-morrow week as fixed for the Foreign Office Vote.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

VISCOUNT **CRANBORNE** (Rochester): Can my right hon. Friend tell us when the Committee stage of the Necessitous School Boards Bill will be taken?

THE **FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY**: I am afraid that I cannot answer my noble Friend at the present moment, as uncertainty hangs over us, and we do not know how long other matters will take.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

MR. **JAMES LOWTHER** (Kent, Isle of Thanet): May I ask my right hon. Friend whether the Employers' Liability Bill is to be taken on Monday?

THE **FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY**: Yes.

NEW MEMBER MADE AFFIRMATION REQUIRED BY LAW.

Alfred Edward Pease, esquire, for the County of York, North Riding (Cleveland Division).

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].

Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 211.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1897-8. WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

*THE **CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.), who on rising to make his annual financial statement was received with general cheers, said: When 12 months ago it was my duty to call the attention of the Committee to the financial condition of the country, I had to place before it the record of a very prosperous year. The credit of the country had never stood so high. The revenue had never been so large; the expenditure was immense; and we had never specifically devoted so much to the reduction of the National Debt.

INCREASING NATIONAL PROSPERITY.

Financially we seemed to be on the crest of the wave, and it would have been rash in me to anticipate that we should rise even higher; and yet we have done so. [*Cheers.*] In spite of political circumstances in the United States, which for a time paralysed trade, in spite of unrest in South Africa, distress in India, anxieties in the East of Europe, the revival of trade which began in the summer of 1895 has been well maintained. [*Cheers.*] The total value of our foreign trade in the year 1895 was 702½ millions; the total value of our foreign trade in 1896 was 738 millions, an increase of 5 per cent.—to some extent in prices, but mainly in volume. I think I may say that our home trade is not less flourishing. The returns of the earnings of the railway companies, the smaller list of failures, the increased return of our Bankers' Clearing-house, especially in the provinces, labour statistics showing better employment in the skilled labour market, and last, but by no means least, the ray of hope given to the most depressed agricultural districts by a good wheat crop and higher prices for it—all, I think, tend to prove the increased prosperity of the country—[*cheers*]—and of that prosperity the revenue has been the best, as it is the keenest, barometer. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not like, however, to talk too much about prosperity, because I know from last Tuesday's Debate that some of my friends are not believers in it. [*Laughter.*] But this I do know—that during the past year our people have smoked and drunk more—[*laughter*]—have earned more money and paid more income tax, have written more letters, have bought and sold more property, and last, but not least, have paid more death duties—[*laughter*]—and therefore I hope I may be allowed, at any rate, to make this deduction, that the country is not going to the bad. ["Hear, hear!"]

REVENUE, 1896-7.

The result has been that my forecast of revenue, which amounted to £100,480,000, has been considerably exceeded. The revenue has produced £103,950,000, or an excess of £3,470,000. On this matter I have a little complaint against the right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire. He is never tired of pluming himself on his great surplus of this time last year. Well, whatever may be the credit or the discredit of having underestimated the revenue by over £5,800,000, it is his and not mine. However, I was very much obliged to him, and I still return him my thanks. But I deprecate his posing as the father of all future surpluses. [*Laughter.*] He told his constituents the other day that the surplus of the year just closed was due to proceedings which were taken before the present Government came into office. The right hon. Gentleman has never admitted his own obligation to the author of the income tax—[*laughter, and* Sir W. HARCOURT: "That was a long time ago"]—and I am afraid I must say that, whatever be the credit or discredit of the excess of revenue which I have just named, amounting to nearly £3,500,000, it rests with me and not with him. My estimate was a mistake, just as his was, and all I have to plead in extenuation is this—that my mistake was a very little one as compared with his, and that it was a mistake on the right side. I was bound to be cautious a year ago, and I am bound to be cautious still in my estimate, having regard to the storm cloud which has just broken in the East of Europe, with respect to which no man can tell how long it may last or how far it may extend. The total sum raised for the Imperial revenue last year was £112,199,000, as against £109,340,000 in 1895-96. Of the amount raised last year, £103,950,000 went to the Exchequer, an increase of £1,976,000 over the preceding year, and £8,249,000 went to the local taxation account, an increase of £883,000 over the preceding year—due, of course, mainly to the Agricultural Rating Act and kindred legislation. I will now explain the details of the revenue (£103,950,000) which went to the Exchequer last year as compared with the details of the revenue of the year 1895-96. The only fallings-off, the Committee will see, were a falling off of £95,000 in land tax, owing, of course, to the remission under the Finance Act of last year, and of £770,000 under the head of estate duty, owing, of course, to the interception of a large sum under the provisions of the Agricultural Rating and other Acts. All other heads showed an increase. The miscellaneous revenue showed an increase of £547,000, owing to greatly increased receipts from coinage and from fee and patent stamps. The gross Post Office receipts increased by £480,000, the gross telegraph receipts by £70,000, and the income tax receipts by £550,000.

Chancellor of the Exchequer.

INCOME TAX.

I have made some inquiry into the reason for that last increase. Sir Alfred Milner, whose loss to the Inland Revenue I deeply deplore—["hear, hear!"]—although all of us feel glad that with his great abilities he is serving his country in a still more prominent position, considered that a great deal of this increase in income tax was due to earlier collection. I suppose a year never passes in which the Government of the day and the authorities of Somerset House are not accused by somebody of accelerating the collection of the income tax. But they never do so, and we did not do so this year. When I asked why the collection was accelerated I was told it was because of the genial weather in January, which had opened the pockets of the taxpayers and stimulated the energies of the tax collectors. But, remembering what a January we had, I did not myself believe that could be the reason. [*Laughter.*] I prefer to think that the income tax payers were in a hurry to pay their taxes owing to the exceptional popularity of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers and laughter.*] I observe that that view is not shared by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and they only reflect, I dare say, the opinion of a correspondent of mine, who wrote to me saying that he had obstinately refused to pay the guinea which was due from him for armorial bearings, and that he dared me to send him to prison so long as the Government maintained their present accursed policy in Crete. [*Laughter.*] I shrank from the challenge, remembering that that guinea would be lost by some unfortunate county council and not by the Exchequer. [*Laughter.*] But, whatever be the cause, there is no doubt that the receipts from the income tax largely increased last year, and the result has been that it has yielded more per penny of the tax than it ever yielded before, and has more than made up for the remissions granted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in 1894.

CUSTOMS REVENUE.

I am glad to say that the receipts from Customs and Excise bear equally satisfactory testimony to the condition of the people. The Exchequer receipts from Customs last year were £21,254,000—£234,000 or 1·11 per cent. above my estimate, and £498,000 or 2·4 per cent. above the Exchequer receipts of 1895-96. The estimated increase of the population in the year was only 0·8, and the Committee will see that the increase of the Customs revenue over that point is good testimony of increased spending power and comfort among the people. [*Cheers.*] The two groups of coffee and dried fruit showed a trifling improvement, which is, I fear, not likely to be maintained owing to the war in the East. Foreign spirits produced a net revenue of £4,316,000, or £99,000 more than in 1895-96. This was due to an increase of £125,000 in the receipts from rum, which is a most unaccountable article. It has been a favourite Customs theory that the receipts from rum went up as the thermometer went down, but considering the temperature of last winter I do not think that that theory can be maintained. I could never make out who drinks rum. Last year I thought it was my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Eastbourne—[*laughter*]—and his colleagues in the Navy, but he so indignantly resented the imputation that I hardly dare to suggest now that, as rum was so much cheaper last year, sailors as sensible men have preferred it to other spirits. [*Laughter.*] Tea has produced £3,800,000, exactly my estimate, and £54,000 more than it produced in 1895-96. Tobacco has produced £11,013,000, or £13,000 more than my estimate, and £265,000 more than in 1895-96. Wine has produced £1,295,000, or £75,000 above my estimate, and £40,000 over the net receipts of 1895-96. The increase in the receipts from wine is a novelty in recent years. I believe it is mainly due to the increased duty which was imposed some years ago by the present First Lord of the Admiralty upon sparkling wines. The taste for what is, I think, erroneously called champagne—[*laughter*]—is very largely increasing. The Committee may be disposed to draw a favourable omen for the future from the increased receipts in tea, tobacco, and wine, but I would point out that the increase has been very much less than the corresponding increase last year as compared with 1894-95. I then had to report an increase upon tea of £158,000—I am speaking of net receipts—and now I have only to report an increase of £54,000. I then had to report an increase on tobacco of £333,000; now the increase is only £265,000. The increase on wine was then £112,000; now it is only £40,000. It looks as if the tide was rather slackening and as if, as regards Customs revenue, we have got very near high-water mark.

EXCISE.

The same is true, but to a less extent, of Excise. The Exchequer receipts from Excise last year were £27,460,000, or £460,000 over my estimate and £660,000 over the Exchequer receipts of 1895-96; but the receipts in 1895-96 were £750,000 more than the receipts of the previous year. Last year the net receipts on beer were £10,900,000, showing an increase of £181,000. Spirits produced £16,038,000, an increase of £434,000 upon the receipts in 1895-96.

DEATH DUTIES.

I now come to the Death Duties. The total receipts from this source were £13,963,000—a small decrease as compared with the receipts of the previous year, which were £14,053,000. Of the receipts I have named, the Exchequer took £10,830,000 and the Local Taxation Accounts £3,133,000. Now, the Exchequer receipts from the Death Duties have very considerably exceeded my estimate. ["Hear, hear!"] There are three causes which I think will, at any rate, partly account for that. In the first place, I have to make a statement which I fear will be discomforting to the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He has a very favourite phrase in all his political addresses to the effect that we have taken £2,000,000 out of the pockets of the general taxpayers and have given it to the landed interest. I am not going to enter into controversial matters as to whether the landed interest has received it or not, but I am anxious for the financial accuracy of the right hon. Gentleman—[*a laugh*]—and, therefore, I beg to observe that it is not £2,000,000.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I said it would be so in this next year.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Ah, but it will not. [*Laughter.*] The estimates formed by the Local Government Board of the effect in the whole year of the Agricultural Rating Act amounted to £1,560,000, and the equivalent grants to Scotland and Ireland make a total of £1,950,000. [*Opposition laughter.*] I think I may put the grant to Ireland out of the question, because Parliament has not yet applied it to the landed interest or to anybody else, and I do not think that Scotch Members would quite support the view that the Scotch equivalent grant has gone entirely, at any rate, to the landed interest; I take it, therefore, that the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman really refers to the agricultural Rating Act. The estimated effect of that Act was a grant of £1,560,000 to the Local Taxation Account. That has actually turned out to be only £1,331,000, and, of course, the corresponding grants are also diminished, so that the total effect is that £1,664,000 will in the current year be transferred from the Death Duties on personalty to the Local Taxation Account, instead of £1,950,000, as was originally estimated. We have, therefore, saved to the Exchequer in the year just closed half that amount, or £143,000, being half the difference between the estimate and the actual sum payable for a whole year. The second reason why the Death Duties have produced more to the Exchequer than I anticipated is that the principal remission which I carried last year—that relating to settled objects of art and scientific and other collections—has not come into effect during the year just concluded. There are two cases now before the Treasury, but, of course, any loss of revenue by them will be felt in the current year. The third reason is that my advisers were wrong in their anticipations as to the total amount of estates over £250,000 in value which were likely to come under the Death Duties in the year. The total amount in value of such estates in 1895-96 was £29,969,000. That was considered by those who were best able to judge an exceptionally high amount, but to the surprise of all of us it has been exceeded in the past year. The total value of such large estates in the year just closed has been £31,354,000—["hear, hear!"]—with the result that £84,000 more duty has been paid upon such estates during the year just closed than was paid in 1895-96. I am bound to say that that is a result for which I am not very sorry—["hear, hear!"]—but, after making due allowance for all these causes, I have to admit that I underestimated the receipts from the Death Duties last year. I think, however, we must be cautious before we move too rapidly in the other direction, and I will give the Committee some reasons for that view. The total amount of what is called free personalty that used on the average to come annually under the probate duties before 1894-95 was, roughly speaking, about £160,000,000. That was increased to £163,500,000 in the year 1895-96; but there has been a remarkable falling-off during the past year—a falling-off of more than £10,000,000. Taking that fact with the stories one hears, and in which I think there is some truth, as to the tendency of rich men to make over their property to their heirs in order to avoid the death duties—["hear, hear!"]—and bearing in mind that nothing is so easily made over as free personalty, I think it is possible that this falling-off of more than £10,000,000 may be but the precursor of a greater falling-off in future years. ["Hear, hear!"] So far as the past year is concerned, it has been practically made up by the increased amount of realty coming under the Death Duties. That has risen from £29,971,000, in 1895-96, to £39,606,000 in the year just closed. But the reason for that increase, of course, is this. It is well known that realty has come into the net of the Finance Act of 1894 much more slowly than personalty, and my advisers assure me that, though they think there may be an increase in the amount of realty coming under the Death Duties in future years, yet the increase of the past year will not be anything like maintained. Then, further, I have to remind the Committee that the succession duty and the legacy duty are yearly diminishing. The legacy duty last year yielded net receipts of £2,550,000, a falling-off of £181,000 as compared with the previous year, due to the exemption of small estates by the Act of 1894, and also, I think, to the fact that people are beginning to substitute gifts for legacies, a very much better thing both for the giver and the receiver, but a loss to the revenue. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] The net receipts from Succession Duty were £824,000, a falling-off of no less than £227,000, as compared with the previous year, which I expect will continue, at any rate, to some extent. Perhaps it may be of interest to the Committee if I tell them in what shares these duties have been paid respectively by realty and personalty. The total Death Duties that were paid by personalty were £11,433,000. The total Death Duties paid by realty were £2,530,000. Out of the duced £10,548,000, and of this realty paid £1,871,000 on a total value of £1,871,000 on a total value of £39,606,000, whilst personalty paid £8,677,000 on a total value of £179,803,000. Of the payments by realty to estate duty £1,708,300 were payments in full, and £162,700 were instalment, showing the fact, which I remarked upon last year, that the preference for paying in full over payment by instalments still continues. ["Hear, hear!"] I have analysed the proportion of the different kinds of realty which came under the Death Duties during the nine months previous to December 31 last. They amounted altogether to about £34,000,000. Of these £16,327,000 represented house property; £10,708,000 represented agricultural land, which was valued at an average of 16½ years' purchase of the gross value, and 20¾ years' purchase of the net value; £2,700,000 represented ground rents, and £4,181,000 represented miscellaneous property. It is estimated that the total Death Duties paid in the year by agricultural land amounted to about £843,000.

GENERAL STAMPS.

I now have only to deal with the item of stamps. Stamps produced £7,350,000, almost exactly the same as in the previous year, and £650,000 more than my estimate. I had allowed for a very large falling-off in stamps on transactions on the Stock Exchange. That falling-off took place. The receipts from that source fell from £1,533,000 to £974,000; but I had not anticipated the great increase that has occurred from stamps on deeds. There has been an increase under that head of £512,000, and an increase in the companies' capital duty of £100,000, making up for the falling-off I have noticed. There is nothing more fluctuating in the whole revenue than the receipts from stamps. I will give the Committee two instances. The receipts from Stock Exchange stamps in 1893-94 were £471,000, and in 1895-96 £1,533,000; the receipts from stamps on deeds in 1893-94 were £1,812,000; last year they were £2,984,000. I hope that the great increase in these latter stamps may be treated as a sign of improvement in the market for real property, but it would be premature to look upon it as a permanent change.

EXPENDITURE FOR THE PAST YEAR.

The estimated expenditure of the past year was £100,046,000; supplementary Estimates, £2,279,000—making a total of £102,325,000; but there were savings amounting to £848,000, so that the total Exchequer issues were £101,477,000, or £1,431,000 more than I estimated. Of this increase, £799,000 was advanced to the Egyptian Government on account of the Dongola expedition, which, as the Committee knows, will bear interest;

£145,000 was due to the expenses of the Indian garrison at Suakin, and the balance of £487,000 was due to increase in the Army, Navy, and Education Votes. I do not want to preach a sermon on economy; I attempted that to a small extent last year; but I am afraid I must say that of all the spending Departments at the present moment, I fear the House of Commons is the worst—[*cheers and laughter*]—and until the want of economy or the want of trying to save leads us to increased taxation, I fear we shall see no change. The increase in our expenditure since 1892-93 has been over 12 per cent.; the increase in our revenues since that time, apart from fresh taxation, has only been nine per cent. ["Hear, hear!"] In five years our Navy expenses have gone up 40 per cent.—[*cheers*]—the expenses of Education have gone up 43 per cent. [*Cheers.*] Both these kinds of expenditure are very popular and, in my belief, very necessary—[*cheers*]—but I must own to some feeling of doubt whether, quite apart from all the differences that we discuss so much here as to denominational and undenominational questions, our system of elementary education is such as to give the nation the best value for its money. [*Cheers.*] After deducting the Exchequer issues from the revenue there was a surplus in the last year of £2,473,000. As the Committee are aware, that has been devoted to the purposes of the Military Works Act of this Session, preventing an increase of new debt instead of reducing the old debt. The result will be, as the Naval Works Act of last year has also done, to augment the balances in the Exchequer. The balances in the Exchequer on April 1, 1896, amounted to a sum considerably above the average—namely, £8,975,000. On the corresponding date this year they amounted to £9,867,000. This increase was due, of course, to the fact that the Admiralty did not spend as much of the surplus of 1895-96 during the year as was anticipated. That surplus was £4,210,000; of this only £1,765,000 has been appropriated, leaving £2,445,000 still available, and, of course, the temporary augmentation of the Exchequer balances has enabled us to dispense temporarily with borrowing for other capital accounts. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean has more than once asked for a statement of naval and military expenditure which would include expenditure on capital account with the expenditure from revenue. I have not been able to frame any trustworthy estimates of the expenditure on capital account by the Admiralty or the War Office for the coming year, because so much of this work, at any rate of the naval works, is of a character that no one can accurately foresee. Take last year. A year ago the Admiralty took powers to expend 2¾ millions under the Naval Works Act, and, as a matter of fact, only £898,000 has been issued. It is clear that the estimate was entirely wrong. Work in the construction of docks, or harbours, or breakwaters, or under water depends so much on weather and seasons and other things which cannot be anticipated, that it is impossible to frame a trustworthy estimate. But I can give the right hon. Gentleman some account of the past two years. In 1895-96 the War Office expended on capital account under the Military Forces Localisation Act, £6,000, under the Imperial Defence Act £65,000, under the Barracks Act £549,000, making a total of £620,000. That, added to the expenditure from revenue in the same year, amounted to an expenditure of £19,091,000. Last year there was expended under the Barracks Act £420,000, under the Military Works Act £80,000, and that, added to the expenditure from revenue, amounted to £18,770,000. The naval expenditure under the Naval Works Act in 1895-96 amounted to £721,000, making a total of £20,358,000 for that year. Last year there was issued under the same Act £898,000, making a total of £23,068,000. Even in this account I am afraid the accounts for the year just ended are not yet accurately closed.

NATIONAL DEBT.

Now I come to the National Debt. On the 1st of April last year the total gross liabilities of the nation were £652,540,000. The funded debt was £589,147,000. The estimated capital value of the terminable annuities was £49,351,000. The unfunded debt was £9,976,600, and loans for capital expenditure on barracks and other purposes not included in the fixed debt charge amounted to £4,066,000. On the

31st March last our total gross liabilities amounted to £644,956,000. We have reduced the funded debt by £1,448,000. ["Hear, hear!"] The terminable annuities have been reduced by £4,363,000, the unfunded debt by £1,843,000, and the loans outside the fixed debt charge show a slight net increase, owing to expenditure on the purchase of the telephones and the Uganda Railway, of £70,000. The total net reduction of the debt for the year is £7,584,000. [*Cheers.*] But, besides being reduced, the unfunded debt has been greatly simplified. It now consists solely of Treasury Bills. The remnant of Exchequer Bonds borrowed by the First Lord of the Admiralty to pay off the holders of Consols who refused to convert has been paid off during the past year. Exchequer Bills have ceased. ["Hear, hear!"] That security, which was invented 200 years ago by one of the greatest of my predecessors, Mr. Charles Montagu, in order to effect a great recoinage for the benefit of the country, has often stood the Treasury in good stead, and never more so than during the great war early in this century. But those Bills, issued as they were latterly for terms of five years, the interest on them being fixed half-yearly by the Treasury, have become inconvenient. Certainly it was an invidious task to fix the interest on Exchequer Bills. You might fix it too high, and if you did there was a loss to the Exchequer; if you fixed it too low the holders of the Bills had a right to present them at certain periods in payment of duty. And in these days Treasury Bills issued for periods of not more than 12 months at a rate fixed by the competition of the market are far more convenient and a better form of security. ["Hear, hear!"] I may state that during the past year the Commissioners of the National Debt, in order to reduce pressure on the Consols market, have invested to the extent of more than one and a-half millions in Treasury Bills.

COINAGE.

I have to report further progress in the restoration of the gold coinage. On January 1, 1896, light gold coins of the value of £29,100,000 had been exchanged. During the year 1896 £2,400,000 more were withdrawn at a cost of £33,000. On January 1, 1897, the amount—it is estimated—of light gold in circulation was only 8 per cent. of the total coinage, and of that light gold one-fifth of the light sovereigns and 30 per cent. of the light half-sovereigns were so nearly legal in weight that neither the eye nor any balance in ordinary use could possibly detect that they were wrong. So far as the metropolis and the principal centres of industry are concerned, it may be said that the restoration of our gold coinage has been completed, though, of course, we still have to provide for perpetual wear and tear. But a good deal still remains to be done in the country districts, and especially in the more remote parts of the United Kingdom. I have been in communication during the past year with the authorities of the Bank of England and the Country Bankers' Association, and I have arranged that greater facilities should be given for the reception by the branches of the Bank of England of small parcels of light gold and the payment of the cost of conveyance from the provinces for a limited period, and I have every reason to anticipate that by the end of six months from this time a good deal will have been done towards completing the restoration of the coinage. The Bank of England may then exercise more stringently than now the discretion granted to it by the Act of 1891. £32,000 provided by that Act for the restoration of coinage is still unexpended, besides the amount authorised to be similarly applied by the Act of 1893. The operations of the Mint with regard to the coinage have been very extensive during the past year. I think as much as six millions sterling in value of different coins has been struck at the Mint in the year which has just closed, as against five millions in the year preceding, and the great increase has been in silver and copper, especially in copper. Twenty-five million pieces of silver coin, and thirty-two million pieces of copper coin have been struck; 245 tons of copper have been used in that coinage, and the copper coinage of the year is more than three times as much in value as that of the preceding year. I inquired the reason. Of course, it is partly due, I hope, to the increased prosperity in trade and generally amongst the working classes. But it was curious to learn that in the view of the authorities of the Mint, not a little of the increased demand for copper was due to the increased number of articles, whether useful or otherwise the Committee may decide, which may be obtained by the simple process of putting a penny in the slot. [*Laughter.*]

SIXTY YEARS' RETROSPECT.

Sir, I have now completed the usual and necessary comparison of the past year with that immediately preceding it, but I hope I shall not be detaining the Committee at too great length if on this occasion I make a more distant comparison. ["Hear, hear!"] In a few weeks the nation will be celebrating a great anniversary of a great reign. [*Loud cheers.*] It will be interesting to all of us to look back on the extraordinary change which has come over the condition of the country during the past sixty years, but I doubt if in anything the extent of that change can be better realised than by a comparison of the altered requirements of the community as reflected in the revenue raised and the expenditure provided for by the State in the year 1836-37, before Her Majesty's accession, and the year just closed. The Committee will be pleased to remember that in the figures I shall give adjustments have been made in order to provide for the alterations—the very useful alterations—in the national account-keeping that have come into use during that period. Now, the total revenue of the nation in the year 1836 was £52,500,000. In the year just closed it was £112,000,000. In the first period, 71·8 per cent., nearly three-quarters, of the revenue was raised by taxes on commodities. ["Hear, hear!"] In the last period 44·3 per cent. was so raised. In the early period almost everything was taxed. ["Hear, hear!"] I wish my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield had lived in those days—[*laughter and cheers*]—because I do not think he would now ask us to imitate that period. ["Hear, hear!"] There were 1,135 separate rates of Customs Duties. There were duties on exports, there were bounties on various articles, and yet the whole net produce of the Customs in the year 1836 was only three-quarters of a million more than we raise now almost entirely from duties on three articles—alcohol, tobacco, and tea. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not want to dwell on the effect of that system upon the industry of the country. I do not want to discuss how much the price of articles grown in this country on which there was no Excise duty may have been raised by duties, often prohibitive, on similar articles imported from abroad, but I should just like to give the Committee a single small, concrete instance of the effect of the Customs Duties at that time upon a few articles of ordinary consumption in a poor labourer's household. ["Hear, hear!"] I quote from a Report addressed in the year 1841 by Mr. Carleton Tufnell to the Poor Law Commissioners. He frames a household budget of a labourer with four children, earning on the average 13s. 2d. a week. He puts down the number of articles that would be consumed in that household, and the annual quantities of each. I have taken only five of those articles—sugar, tea, tobacco, soap, and pepper. Taking the quantities suggested by Mr. Tufnell, and taking the taxation of that day, I find that a labourer would have paid £2 3s. 5d. a year—three and a-half weeks' wages—in taxation on those articles alone. ["Hear, hear!"] Now he would pay on the same articles 12s. 5½d. How has this change been effected? Of course it has been effected by an increased amount of taxation on property; 39·7 per cent. of our revenue now is raised by direct taxation; 23·2 of it was so raised in 1836. But what has been the result of the change on the industry of the country? In 1836 our total foreign trade amounted to a value of £125,000,000; last year it amounted to about £738,000,000. [*Cheers.*] My hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield is not very fond of foreign imports. It may comfort him—I do not know whether it will or not—to know that in 1836 our foreign imports were only £67,000,000 in value. I am glad to know that they have now increased to nearly £442,000,000. [*Cheers.*] But what were our exports of home produce? It is desired to encourage home produce. Has that home produce been encouraged? The exports of home produce were £42,000,000 in 1836; they were £240,000,000 last year. [*Cheers.*] And, Sir, out of this enormous extension of industry has come great and permanent benefit to the working classes of the country, and I know of no way in which that can be better testified than by the increase of deposits in the savings banks. In 1836 those deposits amounted to £18,750,000, placed there by 598,000 persons. Last year they amounted to £155,000,000, placed there by no less than 8,396,000 persons. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1836, out of every 43 men, women, and children, only one was a depositor in the savings banks; now there is one out of every five. [*Cheers.*] There is one other point in which a comparison of the revenue of the two periods is instructive, and that is the great advance in the receipts from non-tax sources in the present day. [*At this point* Sir H. Vincent *entered the House and walked to his seat amidst general cheers and laughter.*] In 1836 only £2,500,000—5 per cent. of the total revenue—was so derived. In 1896-97 nearly £18,000,000, 16 per cent. of the total revenue—came from non-tax sources. Of course, this has come mainly from the great expansion of our postal service. I do not think we can overestimate the extraordinary advantage to the country from the expansion of that service. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1836 it cost 4d. to send a letter 15 miles in the United Kingdom, it cost 1s. to send a letter 300 miles, it cost 10d. to send a letter to France, it cost 1s. 8d. to send a letter to Germany, and it cost 3s. 6d. to send a letter to South America. No wonder it was said that—

> "Letters were sent when franks could be procured,
> And when they could not, silence was endured."

[*Laughter.*] For every letter sent in those days we now send 22, and for every newspaper or packet sent in those days we send 28. There was no telegraph in those days, but we send more telegrams in a year now than post-paid letters were sent at the time of the accession of the Queen; and with that great accommodation to the public there has been an increase in the profit to the Exchequer. In 1836 the Post Office produced a net profit of £1,481,000; last year it produced £3,936,000. ["Hear, hear!"] I now turn to the expenditure. That in 1836 was £50,500,000; last year it was £109,750,000. Under three great heads there has been an enormous increase in our expenditure. The expenditure on the Army, Navy, and civil administration has risen from £16,464,000 in 1836 to £70,377,000 now. We expend nearly four-and-a-quarter times as much. Our Army cost us in 1836 £8,000,000, now £18,250,000. Our Navy cost in 1836 £4,000,000; it now costs £22,000,000. [*Cheers.*] Sir, that increased expense is necessary from the enormous expansion of our Empire, from the great expansion of our commerce, from the greatly incrased cost of the armaments of modern times, but most of all from the great increase in the naval and military strength of other nations and the fact that it is concentrated in fewer hands. But we get, I think, a good return for our money. We have double the number of regular soldiers at home now that we had then. Our soldiers are better paid, better armed, and better housed. We have 70,000 more Militia, we have 80,000 Army Reserve, and 236,000 Volunteers. We have three-and-a-half times as many men and boys in the Navy. We have double the number of Marines, nearly double the number of ships, three times the tonnage, and I do not know how great an increase in offensive and defensive power. Sir, there has been an increase in the cost of civil administration from £4,500,000 to nearly £30,000,000. Our education estimates are now £9,500,000; then that expenditure by the State was unknown. Our grants to local taxation in aid of the taxpayers are £11,500,000; then they were but a few hundred thousand a year; and we spend £4,500,000 more to secure a more efficient administration of the law, in the better protection of the people and of life and property, in the encouragement of science and art, and in a large number of multifarious wants due to our modern civilisation, which were never dreamed of by the people when Her Majesty acceded to the throne. ["Hear, hear!"]

DECREASES OF EXPENDITURE.

But if our increases of expenditure have been remarkable, even more remarkable have been the decreases of expenditure. First of all, there are the services of the Debt. Our predecessors in 1836 had to pay £29,575,000, or 58·5 per cent, of their total expenditure for the annual charge of the Debt. We pay £25,000,000 or 22 per cent of the total expenditure. Interest and management of the Debt cost them £27,686,000. They cost us £17,779,000—["hear, hear!"]—nearly ten millions less than it cost them. They were only able to devote to paying it off £1,889,000. We devote £7,221,000 to the same purpose. With them the annual interest of the Debt was an annual tax of 21s. 8d. per head of the population; with us it is only 9s. per head. On them the total burden of the Debt was £33 9s. 3d. per head of the population; on us it is less than half—£16 6s. 6½d. It is not surprising that Consols have risen in value so much that, while in 1836 a man could obtain an income from Consols of £3 by investing £89 10s., he has now to spend £121 for the same result. ["Hear, hear!"] The second reduction in expenditure has been in the cost of collecting the revenue. It costs us less to collect £94,250,000 of taxes than it cost our predecessors to collect £50,000,000. [*Cheers.*] It cost them £5 14s. 2d. per £100; and it costs us only £2 17s. 8d. per £100. And with all that diminution of the cost, smuggling, which was then a real profession, has become practically extinct. But the last head of all, although small, is perhaps the most interesting at the present time. Our monarchy was never so valuable to the country as it is at the present moment. [*Loud cheers.*] The personal influence of the Sovereign was never so great in European Courts. [*Renewed cheers.*] The Crown was never so necessary as now, when it unites an enormously extended Empire; and since 1836 the population and wealth of the United Kingdom itself have enormously increased. We hear sometimes grumblings at the cost of the monarchy, though we are not likely to hear them in the present year. [*Cheers.*] But no doubt they will be repeated some day. What are the facts as to the comparative cost of the monarchy in 1836 and now? When Her Majesty came to the Throne Parliament voted £385,000 a year to her Civil List, exclusive of Civil List pensions; and Parliament took in return Crown estates which then produced a net income of £203,000. The result was that the taxpayers of that day bore a charge on that account of £182,000. The same Crown estates now produce a net income of £412,000, so that the taxpayers at the present moment make a net profit by that transaction of £27,000 a year. [*Cheers.*] But that is not all. Besides the Civil List we grant allowances to members of the Royal Family and we vote sums for the maintenance of the Royal palaces. These two items amounted in the year 1836, the first to £312,000 a year and the second to £40,000 a year. Last year they amounted, the first to £173,000 a year and the second to £39,000 a year. So that in 1836 the total cost of the monarchy to the taxpayers was £534,000 a year, and last year it was £185,000 a year. [*Cheers.*] We pride ourselves, and I think justly, on possessing the best monarchy in the world. [*Cheers.*] But I am sure we may add that we also have the cheapest. [*Laughter.*] I could go on through many another matter—through the increase of our mercantile marine, the extension of our railway system, the enormous increase of personal wealth, the increased investments of all classes in all forms of industrial enterprise, the increased consumption per head of the population, both of the necessaries and the luxuries of life. Every comparison would bear testimony to the wonderful improvement in the material well-being of the people of the United Kingdom which has occurred since 1836. Our people, I think I may say, are better governed, are better protected, are better educated than they were. Wages have risen, houses are better and healthier, food and clothing are cheaper, and, perhaps as important as anything, crime has enormously diminished. ["Hear, hear!"] I feel that all classes and all persons may not equally have benefited, that much may remain yet to be done. But this, I think, may be said with fairness. At no previous period of the country's history in a similar number of years has so much real improvement and progress been made, and I am quite sure that no similar period can show a nobler reign. [*Cheers.*]

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE, 1897-8.

I hope I have not trespassed too long—[*loud cheers*]—on the attention of the Committee in dealing with the past. I now turn to the future. According to the original Estimates the total expenditure of the coming year may be put at £109,904,000. But of that £8,979,000 is the estimated amount which will go to the local taxation fund. Deducting this I have to provide for the original Estimates of £100,925,000, an excess over the original Estimates of last year of £878,000. There has been a slight decrease of £10,000 on the Consolidated Fund Services. Elsewhere there have been increases, the most important being an increase of £373,000 on the Civil Service Estimates, due principally to colonial and educational requirements, and an increase of £388,000 on the postal service, due to augmented business. But since the original Estimates were presented further Estimates have been presented of £140,000, nearly all for an increase of wages to those employed in the postal services. Then Parliament has passed the Voluntary Schools Act, which will add £616,000 to the educational Estimates of the year, and this House has given a Second Reading to the Necessitous Board Schools Bill, which will involve an additional charge of £110,000. The total increase on the original Estimates is, therefore, £866,000, making a total expenditure of £101,791,000.

ESTIMATED REVENUE, 1897-8.

Against that I anticipate the following revenue: From Customs, £21,500,000, an increase of £246,000 on last year. From Excise, £27,750,000, an increase of £290,000 on last year. Death duties produced last year £10,830,000. They must necessarily produce £832,000 less this year, because that sum will go to the local taxation fund. I have already explained to the Committee some of the reasons why we ought not to be too sanguine in our estimate. So we cannot put the yield of the death duties this year at more than £9,700,000. Stamps I put at £7,000,000, less than last year by £350,000; land and house tax at £2,400,000, a small falling-off of £30,000; income tax at £16,900,000, an increase of £250,000; Post Office at £12,210,000, an increase of £350,000; telegraphs at £2,960,000, an increase of £50,000; Crown lands at £415,000; Suez Canal shares, etc., at £750,000, an increase of £56,000, due to certain loans having been transferred to this head from miscellaneous revenue, and also to the interest on the advance lately made to Egypt; and miscellaneous revenue at £1,775,000, a decrease of £322,000. That gives a total revenue of £103,360,000, against a total expenditure of £101,791,000.

SURPLUS:—NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

That appears to show that I have a sum of £1,569,000 to dispose of. But I am afraid I have a disappointment in store for those who may anticipate that this can be applied to the reduction of taxation. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] The Committee will remember that the original Army and Navy Estimates for the present year were practically identical with those of the preceding year. They were properly so framed at the time. But circumstances have changed. My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, when introducing the Navy Estimates, said that, if any abnormal programmes were actually put into execution which would seem to disturb the general amount of naval power belonging to different countries, Her Majesty's Government would think it their duty to reconsider their position as to the condition of the naval defences of the country. [*Cheers.*] The additional expenditure proposed elsewhere since my right hon. Friend made this statement has been very carefully considered, and Her Majesty's Government have decided, in conformity with the policy announced by my right hon. Friend, that an addition of half a million should be made to the Navy Estimates. [*Cheers.*] A Supplementary Vote for this amount will be proposed, and the mode in which the sum will be appropriated will be explained by the First Lord of the Admiralty on the Shipbuilding Vote. But it must be clearly understood that a special addition like this to the expenditure on new construction in one year does not necessarily fix the normal expenditure for future years. Therefore I have to provide on that score for £500,000.

SOUTH AFRICAN GARRISON.

Then Her Majesty's Government have had to consider very carefully the responsibility of their position as the paramount Power in South Africa—[*loud* *cheers*]—and they have deemed it necessary to make a material increase in the Imperial garrison in that part of the world. [*Cheers.*] My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies will take an early opportunity of explaining the reasons for that decision—["hear, hear!"]—but I may shortly say that it has been taken in no aggressive spirit—["hear, hear!"]—that we intend to fulfil to the utmost all our own obligations; but we expect others to do the same. [*Cheers.*] I have to reserve £200,000 on account of that, which will leave me £869,000 to deal with.

POST OFFICE REFORMS.

It is clear to the Committee that this sum is quite insufficient to make any reduction in what may be called general taxation. ["Hear, hear!"] To devote it—or such portion of it as can be spared from the normal small margin such as the Chancellor of the Exchequer is always entitled to—to the reduction of the income tax would be impossible, and to devote it to the reduction of the duty on any article of great popular consumption would only lead to the advantage of the dealers in that particular commodity. I do not think it ought to be devoted to anything but the general advantage of the public at large. ["Hear, hear!"] I have to remind the Committee that our revenue is derived, not only from taxes, but from payments by the public for services rendered to them, and if these payments are in any case higher than they ought to be the result is tantamount to excessive taxation. I call the attention of the Committee to the net receipts from Post Office revenue. ["Hear!"] The net estimated profit from the postal service in the current year, after allowing £139,000 for the increase in the payments to postal servants, amounts to £3,665,000. My noble Friend the Postmaster General desires to make certain postal reforms with a view to the development of the rural districts—[*cheers*]—by a more generous treatment in postal matters, and to simplify regulations and benefit trade by removing unnecessary restrictions, and to some extent benefiting the writers of foreign and colonial as well as inland letters. He has placed before me proposals which I will shortly state to the Committee, as to which I wish to say that the credit is entirely due to him; that I have but accepted his recommendations and ask Parliament to provide the funds to meet them. In the first place, he proposes an important reform with regard to the delivery of letters in the United Kingdom. I dare say the Committee will hardly believe that at the present moment there are 16 millions of letters sent annually by the post in the United Kingdom which are not delivered by the Post Office to the persons to whom they are addressed, but are left at the Post Office or some other house of call until they are called for. ["Hear, hear!"] Even if we allow, as we may allow, for circulars and certain other communications which no one is very anxious to receive—[*laughter*]—yet the Post Office calculates that there are ten millions of real letters in that position every year—a number equal, I believe, to three-quarters of our total foreign correspondence. It does not require much thought to see what a hardship that must be upon persons living in rural districts, and especially upon the poor. [*Cheers.*] I do not think myself it ought to have lasted so long. ["Hear, hear!"] It has not lasted so long in France and Belgium. In both those countries they have, I think, a regular delivery to every house. Our Post Office intend to bring about the same. It will take a considerable time, for they will have first to commence, no doubt, with a delivery in every little hamlet, but as fast as possible they will take steps to secure that there shall be a delivery—not necessarily every day, but still a regular delivery—at every house in the United Kingdom. [*Cheers.*] That will lead also to a multiplication of rural post offices and of pillar letter-boxes in order to provide for the same kind of services. Further, with regard to the delivery of telegrams—[*cheers*]—it is proposed that telegrams shall be delivered free within three miles—["hear, hear!"]—and that for distances beyond that limit the charge shall be reduced to 3d. a mile from the office door. ["Hear, hear!"] It is proposed in the metropolis that there shall be free delivery of telegrams on every day of the week, and at all hours of the day and night. ["Hear, hear!" *cries of* "Oh!" *and laughter.*] I am afraid that hon. Members have not quite caught my meaning. [*Laughter.*] I have no desire to be woke up by a telegram at night. [*Laughter.*] But the present state of things is this—that on Sundays and at certain hours of the night some telegraph offices are temporarily closed, so that telegrams addressed to persons living at a considerable distance from the offices which are left open have to be paid for according to the distance from the office which is open, and not from the office which is closed. That is a public hardship in the metropolis, and therefore in future the delivery of telegrams will be free at all hours. ["Hear, hear!"] Complaint has been made on all sides as to the cost of the guarantee required for telegraph offices in rural disstricts. ["Hear, hear!"] The Postmaster General feels it impossible entirely to abolish that system, because he considers that it would result in unreasonable demands—perhaps, say, from wealthy persons with a shooting-box in the Highlands for a telegraph office for their own service. But my noble Friend proposes that the Post Office shall bear half the cost of the liability of any such guarantee, so that the locality, or the persons concerned, will only be liable to half the charge for which they are now liable; and, further, when the term of the guarantee has expired, my noble Friend proposes that the telegraph office to which the guarantee relates shall be continued, if it is of any service whatever to the public at large, without further guarantee. ["Hear, hear!"] Then a reduction is proposed in the parcel postage rate—["hear, hear!"]—for every subsequent pound beyond the first. The present charge is 1½d., amounting to a maximum of 1s. 6d. In future it is proposed that the charge shall be as now, 3d. for the first pound, and then 1d. per pound, up to a maximum of 1s. These matters may seem to the Committee small things in themselves. [*Cries of* "No!"] But after all, much of the comfort and discomfort of life, especially in the rural districts, is made up of small things—["hear, hear!"]—and when these changes are carried into effect many an inhabitant in the rural districts will feel that his lot is somewhat more equalised than it was with that of the more fortunate dwellers in the towns. The next change is one of a larger character, and perhaps more important to tradesmen than those I have mentioned. At the present moment samples and books travel by post at cheaper rates than ordinary letters. The postage of samples and books is, however, surrounded by the Post Office with the most minute restrictions, which are very troublesome to the public and to the Post Office officials themselves. The result of those restrictions is often absurd. Take, for instance, the sample post. A man may send a pair of gloves as a sample, but if the person to whom the gloves are sent buys them a penalty is incurred. A gardener may send cut flowers as a sample, but if they are bought a penalty is incurred. And yet flowers may be sent cheaply by parcel post to the purchaser in England from the south of France. With regard to the book post, I dare say the Committee think they know what a book is. [*Laughter.*] I thought I did until I studied the two and a-half pages of closely-printed matter in the Postal Guide, which explains what a book is in the eyes of the Post Office. [*Laughter.*] The Postmaster General proposes that in the future the sample post shall be entirely abolished; that the book post shall be abolished above 2oz., under which books will still go for a halfpenny, and that all articles, whether letters, samples, or books, under a maximum of 4oz., shall be sent for one penny —[*cheers*]—with a further charge of one halfpenny for every 2oz. exceeding that amount. I believe that will be felt by the public as a very great advantage, as saving of infinite trouble, and also it will be a very great saving of trouble to the officials of the Post Office. I now come to the last point, which relates to foreign and colonial letters. I am afraid I have nothing to say which will satisfy my hon. Friend the Member for Canterbury. [*Laughter.*] It must be remembered that the paying postal service is the home postal service; and even now foreign letters are carried at a loss. But it is proposed that in future there shall be a change made in the postage of foreign and colonial letters, which now amounts to 2½d. per half oz. The amount fixed for the postage under the rules of the Postal Union is 25 centimes, and 2½d. was adopted by our postal authorities as the nearest expression in English coinage to 25 centimes, the result being that we have at present the dearest foreign postage of any important nation in the world. The rate cannot be altered without the assent of the Postal Union, which meets, I believe, next month at Washington, and at that meeting our representatives will propose that the rate of 2½d. shall be reduced to 2d., which will, at any rate, place us on an equality with other nations. [" Hear, hear ! "] It will take some time to bring all those changes into operation, especially the last change, which cannot be brought into operation until January 1 next at the earliest. I calculate that the total cost of them, assuming that they will be brought into operation as soon as possible, will be £366,000 for the current year.

FINAL BALANCE SHEET.

Now, Sir, I have to state to the Committee my final balance-sheet. I have provided for a tax revenue of £85,250,000, and a revenue from non-tax sources, after making the necessary deductions in my previous Post Office Estimates, of £17,794,000—a total of £103,044,000. The expenditure will be £26,650,000 for the Consolidated Fund Services, £18,341,000 for the Army Services, £22,338,000 for the Naval Services, £20,895,000 for the Civil Services, £2,762,000 for Customs and Inland Revenue, £11,555,000 for Post Office Services, a total of £102,541,000, leaving me a margin of £503,000. Out of that margin I expect to have to provide for certain expenditure in connection with the improvement of education in Scotland, and also for technical education in Ireland, according to promises already made in this House ; and, further, for an expenditure which I mention because I am sure the House will desire to be generous with regard to it—that is, for the entertainment of our foreign and colonial guests on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee. [*Cheers.*] I leave myself, I think, not too large a margin for the current year. I have no doubt that I shall be told, as indeed I have been told, already, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, that in each of two successive years I have had a very large surplus and have not reduced taxation. [*Opposition cheers.*] Well, Sir, I demur to that statement. I do not dwell on the small reduction of the land tax, or of the estate duties which Parliament sanctioned last year ; I believe they were just, and I believe they have done good, but they were small in amount. Nor do I dwell upon the postal reforms which I have just announced, although I believe they will be of great benefit to the people—[*cheers*]—and that they will give relief which is in reality a reduction of taxation. But, Sir, I join issue with the right hon. Gentleman on the main item of his argument. He says that money has been squandered in the Agricultural Rating Act—[*Opposition cheers*]—and the corresponding Acts for Scotland and Ireland which were passed last year ; in the Voluntary Schools Act, which was passed this year ; and in the Bill now passing through the House for the benefit of necessitous schools. I say that each and every one of those Measures are direct or indirect reductions of taxation. [*Ministerial cheers.*] What is it that is becoming the most oppressive burden now upon the people ? It is not Imperial taxation ; it is local taxation. [" Hear, hear ! "] In the Measures which I have named we have attempted to relieve local taxation through Imperial revenues. I believe that has been a wiser policy than if we had attempted to devote the same amount which has been absorbed by those Measures to reducing any Imperial tax. [*Ministerial cheers, and Opposition cries of* " No ! "] There are taxpayers who complain. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton made an eloquent appeal last year on behalf of the payers of income tax. There are persons in the country to whom the income tax is odious, although I believe they are a decreasing number. I had a correspondent who wrote from Scotland and told me that in his opinion the income tax was a device of the evil one to lead us into temptation, that it was opposed alike to Christianity and morality—[*laughter*]—and that it could not be defended by any believer in a future state. [*Renewed laughter.*] I am happy to say that he went on to inform me that he had resisted the temptation to cheat the revenue. Another correspondent believed that a tax of 10s. per horse on pleasure horses would enable me to make a sensible reduction in the income tax. There are other persons with similar delusions. I had one correspondent who went even beyond the right hon. Gentleman opposite in his admiration of death duties, for to his mind all tombstones and memorial tablets were fulsome and useless luxuries, which were as impious as they vere foolish. I had another correspondent who thought a large revenue could be raised by making bachelors over 25 years of age liable to income tax f their incomes were over £80 a year, because they only spent their money in njuring themselves. [*Loud laughter.*] And, finally, almost everybody who does not ride a bicycle thinks that an enormous reduction might be made in the taxation which particularly presses upon himself if a small tax were placed on those who do ride bicycles. Sir, I have resisted all these temptations for altering our system of taxation. I hope that some day it may be possible to make a sensible reduction in the income tax—[" hear, hear!"]—but I do not think that the reduction ought to be made by transferring the burden to other shoulders. I hope in quieter times than these it may be possible to make it by a real reduction in our expenditure. [*Cheers.*] I do not think it wise to make small changes in our system of taxation which, even if defensible in themselves, yet by their very novelty would harass and disturb the complex and delicate fabric of our trade. Great changes in our fiscal system will sometimes be necessary. [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: "Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] If after full inquiry it is found that our present fiscal system does real injustice to Scotland and to Ireland, a great change will be necessary then. But, Sir, at the present moment, with increasing comfort among the people, with wealth more widely diffused, with Imperial taxation more easily borne than at any previous period of our history, I do not think it is a time for change. [*Cheers.*] So far as I can see, I may well be content if it can be said that, at any rate, I have done nothing to impede, and, I hope, a trifle to assist, the progress of the country in that direction which we all desire. [*Loud cheers.*]—The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution for the reimposition of the duty on tea.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.), who on rising was received with loud Oppositon cheers, said: I feel it would be presumptuous on my part to offer congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman on the ability, the clearness, and the satisfactory character of the statement he has made. The capacities of the right hon. Gentleman are too well known to this House to require any compliment of that description. One of these days he may acquire in the history of this country the addition of the adjective which formerly belonged to a Chancellor of the Exchequer who went by the name of "Prosperity Robinson." [*Laughter.*] I shall not repeat to the right hon. Gentleman the lecture which he addressed to me last year upon the great offence committed by a Chancellor of the Exchequer who had a surplus beyond his expectation. He told me that it was no feather in the cap of any Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the triumph of a Chancellor of the Exchequer was when the Exchequer receipts agreed with his Estimates; he said that he was profiting by my miscalculation, and that he hoped that for once and only for once the authorities of the revenue had proved fallible guides. Sir, I am very glad they have proved this year again to be fallible guides. I am very glad indeed that the right hon. Gentleman has made a miscalculation in having an excess of revenue of several millions above his Estimates, and that he will dispense with that feather in his cap which he said was the highest honour to which a Chancellor of the Exchequer could aspire. We must all rejoice in these evidences of the growing prosperity of the country, and in every department I hope the lesson will be taken to heart. Although I sometimes disagree with the right hon. Gentleman, in the application of his principles, I always concur and find myself in absolute agreement with the financial principles which he lays down. I regret very much that the hon. Member for Sheffield arrived too late to receive instruction from the Chancellor of the Exchequer —[*laughter*]—but I hope he will spend to-morrow in reading several times over the doctrine which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has so wisely and well laid down to-day, especially that part addressed to the hon. Member. The right hon. Gentleman took some exception to my having claimed to have supplied him to a certain extent with this bountiful revenue of which he has had the disposal, and he said that at all events the surplus for this year—though he pleaded in extenuation that his offspring was only a little one—[*laughter*]—was entirely due to himself and not at all to me. But then he proceeded to say that the Death Duties had produced considerably more than he expected. Well, so they did; they gave him a million more than he calculated for, and therefore I think I had some right to the claim that I had contributed to his prosperity. The fact is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is only a slow, and as yet, I am sorry to say, an imperfect convert to the success of the Death Duties. He very candidly said he was surprised last year that they had yielded so much as they had done. He has given us an interesting account of the working of the Death Duties. But there is a more apt pupil in the study of the death duties than the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that is my predecessor, now the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, not in a Budget speech, but in an after-dinner oration, confessed his complete conversion to the merits of the Death Duties. I read with great satisfaction this statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He said:—

> "When I see the proceeds of some of these taxes which have been imposed, and their effect, I endeavour to gauge that effect as regards their ability to meet certain items of naval expenditure, and when the changes and chances of this mortal life bring millionaires, and more than millionaires, under the operation of these duties I cannot resist the temptation of translating the cheques poured into that till over which Sir Alfred Milner lately presided into naval defence. When a cheque for £100,000 is paid into the Revenue by more than a millionaire, I say that represents two torpedo boats, or if it is a smaller sum, that represents a most effective gunboat."

This is the gentleman who in 1894, when the Death Duties were proposed to meet a great and increased demand for naval expenditure, offered to them at every stage the most violent and most bitter opposition. He predicted every sort of financial disaster from these unsound principles and their application He opposed that tax and every other proposal to meet the exigencies of the country, and now he counts up the gains derived from this iniquitous taxation and ends in this way:—

> "More seriously I look to the smoothness with which the Inland Revenue is collected, and I think how wisely, on the whole, the taxes have been imposed and with what judgment they have been collected. Where should we be in asking for these colossal funds if they could not be provided without undue pressure on the taxpayer and if they gall on the shoulders of those who had to bear them?"

That is the testimony of the right hon. Gentleman to the effect of the Death Duties. But, instead of speaking in the exhilaration of an after-dinner oration, he ought to have made in his place in this House, in a costume which would have become him, and in which we should have been delighted to have seen him, the declaration—

> "Where should we have been if, in asking for these colossal funds, they could not be provided without undue pressure on the taxpayer, and if they gall on the shoulders of those who have to bear them?"

Was there ever greater testimony to the soundness of the principles which the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to defeat three years ago? The right hon. Gentleman has testified also to the injustice of some of the apprehensions that were entertained at that time. What was the argument specially coming from the landed interest? They said: "You are ruining the landed interest; they cannot find the money to pay these Death Duties;" and the consequence was a long period of instalments was allowed in order to make the facilities for payment greater. Now, how has it turned out? So far from the pressure being undue, and so far from the instalments being necessary, people find it more convenient to pay the Death Duties at once. Is not that testimony to the fact stated by the First Lord of the Admiralty that these funds have been provided without undue pressure on the taxpayer, and do not gall the shoulders of those who have to pay them? [*Opposition cheers.*] After all we have heard, and what we hear every day of the moans of the Duke of Devonshire and others as to the injury and destruction of their class, let us see what that class pays. The right hon. Gentleman says the sum contributed out of land is £800,000.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: £843,000.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, but what is given back to the landowners? You have given them back £1,300,000. [*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] That is the manner in which you have dealt with the landed interest. The Chancellor of the Exchequer just now said that this was all done in relief of rates. Yes, Sir, but of whose rates? Not the rates of the whole country, not the rates of all classes, not the rates of the classes who suffer most from the rates and who are the dwellers in towns. The complaint we have made is not that you have reduced the rates, but that you have reduced them in the most unfair and partial manner, and have given relief where the rates are lightest and none where they are heaviest, and that in the very year when the right hon. Gentleman, in the statement he has made, which we all recognise with satisfaction, says that the landed interest has had the advantage of improved prices and improved profits. I listened with great interest and satisfaction to the admirable review which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave of the financial condition of this country as it was at the commencement of the auspicious reign of the Queen, and what it is to-day. Yes, and there was one incident in that review the most important of all. It was the reform—yet incomplete, I hope and believe—of the monstrous injustice by which previously to that period the whole or almost the whole of the taxation of the country was placed on the poor and consumer—the direct taxation which fell on the wealthier class was only one-fourth of the taxation of the country, and three-fourths were borne by the consuming class. If there is anything we have learnt from that important investigation of the Irish Commission it is this—that indirect taxation is most unjust in its incidence because it fell on those least able to bear it, and that these reforms, associated in the main with the great names of Peel and Gladstone, which increased direct taxation and reduced indirect taxation, were the keystone of the prosperity of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke. But what was the cause of those reforms? The cause was the Reform Bill of 1832, which put power into the hands of the people. So long as power remained in the hands of those whose interest was identified with indirect taxation as against direct taxation, you had direct taxation at the lowest possible point, and indirect taxation at the highest. It is only since the people have had real control of the taxation of the country that it has been possible to establish a just system of taxation. That is the practical lesson which is to be learned from the review the right hon. Gentleman has placed before us. I must again repeat what I have said elsewhere, and the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to it, that I think it is deeply to be deplored that in two successive years of a great surplus there has been no material relief of taxation. The right hon. Gentleman claims a grant to the landed interest of a sum of £2,000,000, and which he says he estimated at £1,950,000. I will give him the benefit of the difference of £50,000. What I desire is a reduction of taxation which would be for the benefit of all classes and not of one; and what I would point out is that, but for gifts of this description, whether to the landed interest or to a particular religious denomination to whom he has made a grant under the Voluntary Schools Bill, the right hon. Gentleman must have had a surplus, according to the account he gives to-day, of £2,000,000. Owing to them, and the £1,500,000 of which he spoke as disposable surplus until he came to dispose of it in military operations, he would have had between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 for the reduction of taxation with which he might have reduced direct and indirect taxation. I will not go further into that matter now, following the example of my great predecessor, Mr. Gladstone. ["Hear, hear!"] He always held that on the first night of the Budget it was not wise to go into the details of the financial operations. But there is one thing to which I must advert, and that is what I call the fly in the pot of ointment of the right hon. Gentleman. He has announced as one of his reasons why the surplus he had at his disposal is to be melted down that a sum of several hundred thousand pounds is to be provided for the support of a war policy in South Africa. [*Opposition cheers.*] Yes, I know the right hon. Gentleman is not in favour of a war policy in South Africa. But the Minister responsible for the colonies has made it sufficiently apparent that this is a war policy. In every utterance of his during the last few months there is no doubt he has been endeavouring to exasperate sentiment in that country—[*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and Opposition cheers*]—and to produce what, thank God, he has failed in producing—a racial war. [*Renewed Opposition cheers.*]

Yes, Sir; but his policy has been defeated. It has been defeated by the good sense and good feeling of the people of Cape Colony, and the vote taken the other day was a vote of condemnation of this war policy. That vote was in support of a peace policy, and by a majority, I am happy to say, the Cape Government rejected the policy which is represented by these additional estimates. [*At this point* Mr. CHAMBERLAIN *entered the House and took his seat on the Treasury Bench amidst loud Ministerial cheers.*] I rejoice in that majority, and I repeat in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman that it was the triumph of the peace party in South Africa. It was the defeat of an attempt to get up this ill-feeling, utterly unjustifiable, utterly without foundation, and it was a declaration on the part of the majority of the people of Cape Colony and of the Government of the Cape that they would seek the arrangement of all differences which might exist between them and the Government of the Transvaal by peaceable and not by warlike operations. [*Cheers.*] Therefore, when we are asked to refuse the reduction of the taxation of the people in order that we may contribute money to promote aggressive and warlike operations in South Africa—[*loud Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"]—we shall oppose the most determined resistance; and I deeply regret that in this Budget, which in other respects might have been regarded as a satisfactory and prosperous Budget, we should be introduced to a declaration that the resources of this country and the means by which the taxation of this people might have been reduced should be applied to purposes which, in my opinion, are utterly unjustifiable—[*Ministerial laughter and Opposition cheers*]—which are rejected by the people of the Cape Colony, which are rejected by the Government of the Cape Colony—and I venture to say that the exhibition of this spirit is one of the most injurious things in connection with the Empire that has yet been proposed in the House of Commons. [*Opposition cheers.*] It might have been dangerous. I am happy to say it is not dangerous now; the vote in the Assembly of the Cape Colony has disposed of that. It is utterly impossible for any Party or any Minister to enforce upon the people of the Cape the spirit of hostility and aggression which they themselves are unwilling to accept. In regard to this part of the Budget I am sorry to tell the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, though I do not impute to him a desire to proceed in any spirit of this description, if he is going to make proposals of that character, inspired by that spirit, and likely to have that effect, I am afraid he must count upon great resistance on the part of those who desire peace in South Africa as they desire it in the rest of the Empire.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN), who was received with loud Ministerial cheers, said: I certainly did not expect to intervene in this Debate, and it is difficult for me to justify the South African policy of the Government on the occasion of the introduction of the Budget. But it has been made absolutely necessary for me to say a few words, at all events, in reference to the pernicious and dangerous language—[*loud Ministerial cheers*]—unpatriotic in the highest degree—[*renewed cheering*]—embarrassing to the Government, and injurious to the cause of peace—which has just fallen from the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers.*] Sir, I am sorry I did not hear the opening words in which he referred to this subject; but, as I understand, the right hon. Gentleman accuses the Government of being about to embark or having embarked upon what he calls an aggressive and warlike policy, involving warlike operations in South Africa, and he says that this war policy has been rejected by the Cape Government and people. Sir, both these statements are absolutely inaccurate. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The policy of the Government in South Africa is exactly the same now as it has been from the first. Their objects are the same. The only thing that has changed, to a certain extent, are the circumstances. The circumstances in South Africa have changed to some extent. The policy of the Government remains the same, and that policy of the Government is to maintain its obligations, not to engage in any aggressive operations whatsoever; not to attack the independence of a State which, even in diplomatic language, can be termed a friendly State, but to maintain its own rights and the rights of the nation. [*Loud*

Ministerial cheers.] I hoped that this policy would continue to be, as it has hitherto been, a non-Party policy, supported from all sides of the House. That hope has altogether disappeared in face of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman —[*cheers*]—and now I challenge him and his Party to raise the issue. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] Let us know where we are. [*Ministerial cheers and Opposition cries of* "Crewe."] Let us know at the earliest possible date upon what point they are prepared to take issue with us. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Are they prepared to take issue with us when we say that, while we observe our own obligations, we intend that the obligations which are held towards us shall also be maintained? [*Cheers.*] What is it that is now in question between us and the Government of the Transvaal? It is not any interference on our part in the internal affairs of the Transvaal; not any attack by us upon the Convention to which the Transvaal willingly assented. The difference between us arises from the fact that on more than one occasion the Transvaal Government have broken the Convention, and we are calling upon them in friendly and conciliatory terms to give us satisfaction. And this is the opportunity the right hon. Gentleman takes to tell them in effect that they are not to give us satisfaction; to tell them in effect it is we who are aggressive—[*cheers*]—that it is we who have taken the initiative, and that they will have the support of the Government and the people of Cape Colony, because that is his second statement. [*Cheers.*] Upon what does he base that? I suppose upon the telegrams, and he must have been much more acute than I am if he understands entirely their importance and meaning. What I see in those telegrams is that the Cape Parliament practically unanimously has declared that they are determined that the obligations on both sides shall be observed.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Peaceably.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is desirable that peace should be preserved. We hold that as strongly as the right hon. Gentleman, but we do not hold that peace can be preserved by telling the Transvaal they can break their obligations with impunity. [*Cheers.*] That is practically the policy which the right hon. Gentleman has expounded. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] I defy him to point to anything in the Dispatches before the House—which are open for discussion—that can, by any strained interpretation, be assumed to be in any way provocative to the Transvaal. [*Cheers.*] We have called their attention in conciliatory language to the breaches of the Convention which have taken place. We have assumed that they would be willing to meet our demands for satisfaction, and while the matter is still pending, and under the consideration of the Transvaal Government, the right hon. Gentleman takes this opportunity of saying we are pursuing an aggressive policy, and shall not have his support.

Sir W. HARCOURT: You have come for £200,000. [*Opposition cheers.*]

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: What nonsense! [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] We come for £200,000 after we know, and the right hon. Gentleman knows, that the Transvaal has come for a million—for hundreds and hundreds of thousands. [*Cheers and Opposition cries of* "Where?"] The Transvaal has been arming to the knowledge of the House and of everybody—[An hon. Member: "What about the raid?"]—to an extent which is absolutely unjustifiable by any ordinary policy of defence. We have not complained, we have not thought it consistent with our dignity to make any complaint whatsoever. The result of that has been that at the present moment the armaments of the Transvaal are altogether disproportionate to the defensive resources of our possessions in South Africa. Our forces in South Africa were established there and the numbers were settled at a time when these enormous armaments had not even been thought of. Now, after an amount of very considerably more than a million of money has already been expended, when armaments are still going on, when batteries of artillery, Maxim guns, millions of rounds of ammunition, and hundreds of thousands of rifles have been to our knowledge imported into the Transvaal, ordered from foreign countries and from this country—under these circumstances what is this country to do? Is it an aggressive or a warlike operation if we think it necessary to reinforce our garrison at the Cape and to bring it up to something nearer a fair proportion in regard to those operations to which I have referred? [*Cheers.*]

And yet, Sir, it is under these circumstances, when this extremely modest demand is made for a sum which will be sufficient to send a brigade of artillery and an additional regiment to the Cape, that the right hon. Gentleman comes down here and in turgid language talks about an aggressive and warlike policy which the feeling of the Cape will entirely repudiate. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Sir, I do not believe the feeling of the Cape will repudiate it in the least. I believe, on the contrary, the feeling of every loyal British subject at the Cape will be one of gratitude and satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government understand and recognise their position as the representatives of the paramount Power, and that they are determined, in words that I have used again and again, to maintain in their integrity all the rights which we have under the Convention. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*]

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked if there was to be a permanent strengthening of the garrison at the Cape?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is only intended at the present moment to increase the regular garrison in South Africa by a brigade of artillery—three batteries, that is—and an additional regiment.

Mr. WARNER said he considered that £200,000 would be a great deal more than enough for taking such a number of troops from England and keeping them at the Cape for a few months. If it was an increase of the Army that would account for it, but if it was merely a transfer of troops from England to the Cape then this was a larger sum than was required for that purpose.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Of course, I am not responsible for the Estimate. That is an estimate for the transfer of that force to the Cape, and for maintaining them there. I regard it as substantially and practically a permanent increase of the garrison.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) expressed surprise at the tone of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition with regard to this miserable sum of £200,000. If the right hon. Gentleman had read the last Blue-book concerning affairs in South Africa, as he had done, he thought he would have been struck, as he had been struck, by the repeated occasions on which the Colonial Secretary had condoned and forgiven repeated undoubted breaches of the Convention by the Transvaal. ["Hear, hear!"] Though treaties had been signed and completed and ratified in direct breach of that Convention, the Colonial Secretary had nevertheless advised Her Majesty to agree to those treaties.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The hon. Gentleman has omitted to observe, perhaps, that I am a member of the South African Committee, and I have heard the Colonial Secretary there. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.*]

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES failed to observe the relevance of that remark—[*cheers*]—and suggested that perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would pay even so humble a Member as himself the compliment of listening to him in silence. [*Opposition laughter.*] He repeated that it was impossible to read that Blue-book without being struck with the patience exhibited by the Colonial Secretary in face of repeated breaches of the Convention undertaken, he did not hesitate to say, for the purpose of provocation to this country. It was written in every line of the Dispatches which reached them from the Transvaal that these breaches were openly and avowedly made for the very purpose of provoking a strong feeling of irritation in this country, and when their attention was called to the breaches they dealt with the matter with the utmost insolence. That was the only word that could possibly be used. ["Hear, hear!"] He yielded to no one in that House in the feeling he had that it would be a most tremendous misfortune for this country to be engaged in a war with the Transvaal. [*Opposition cheers.*] He was most profoundly convinced that such a war could lead to no good result either for the Transvaal itself or for this country, and he earnestly trusted the Colonial Secretary might be able to avoid anything even approaching such a disastrous termination to the correspondence—and, if he might use the word, the disputes—that had been going on between the Colonial Office and the Transvaal up to this time. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought the Colonial Secretary might be able to avoid war; and, in his opinion, if any man could avoid it—if any man were competent to deal with such difficult subjects as Dutch statesmen under Boer control—it was the right hon. Gentleman below him. [*Cheers.*] But undoubtedly his difficulties were not diminished, but very largely increased, by such speeches as that which they had just heard—[*cheers*]—by a speech announcing to the Boers that, right or wrong, they should have the support of Gentlemen who sat on that side of the House—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and Ministerial cheers*]—and that, whatever happened, they would not want friends to denounce the Government of this country, even if they were driven into a struggle which they firmly intended to avoid if it were at all possible. [*Cheers.*] That was a digression—[*laughter*]—into which he was tempted by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He came now to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Here again, he must say, the right hon. Gentleman opposite showed a certain want of appreciation. As to the First Lord of the Admiralty, he delivered him into the hands of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. [*Laughter.*] He would rather see that right hon. Gentleman at the Admiralty than at the Exchequer, because he could not forget that he was a first-class sailor, but he did not think he was anything like so good a financier, especially from the point of view of the Death Duties. He could not forget that it was the right hon. Gentleman who exaggerated that monstrous assumption, which was enshrined in the Finance Act, that a man was dead three months before he died. That was Mr. Gladstone's assumption, but the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty exaggerated it into twelve months. He could not forgive him that—he should never forgive him. [*Laughter.*] Now with regard to the Death Duties themselves. He had endured the taunts of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in silence and in patience, because he knew his day would come. [*Laughter.*] He predicted evasions; the right hon. Gentleman opposite ridiculed them. There had been, as the right hon. Gentleman knew too well, many evasions. There had been some evasions in which he himself could scarcely have believed had they not been proved before him by irrefutable evidence—evasions to which, perhaps, the attention of the House would subsequently be called, and which, he ventured to think, would provoke amazement in the breasts of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had always predicted that one effect of this Act would be to reduce the amount of capital brought into charge under the Finance Act of 1894. What had occurred? In their Report for last year, 1895-6, the Commissioners of Inland Revenue said:—

> "In our Report of last year we called attention to the great falling off in the amount of 'personalty situate in the United Kingdom passing by will or intestacy,' whether subject to Estate Duty or Probate Duty. The amount of such property in 1894-5 was only £141,421,000, as compared with £159,688,000 in 1893-4. At the same time we combated the notion that this falling off was due mainly to evasion of the duty consequent upon the higher rates imposed by the Finance Act of 1894. The correctness of our contention appears to be borne out by the results of the past year, in which the amount of personalty of this description has once more risen to £162,569,000, being £21,148,000 in excess of 1894-5, and £2,881,000 in excess of 1893-4."

And then they went on to say they were convinced that evasion was carried on, and that it would be carried on. Mark the result of the present year as shown by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Whereas this personalty in 1891 was £190,000,000; in 1892, £160,000,000; and in 1893, £159,500,000: in 1894-5, as the very first result of the Finance Act, it fell to £141,400,000; in 1895-6 it did rise to £163,500,000, but in this year the Chancellor of the Exchequer said it had again fallen by £10,000,000 or to £153,000,000. This was a most pregnant fact, and he warned the Committee that that diminution had not stopped. On the contrary, it would go on increasing. He never expected it to reach to a very great height at this particular time. He expected it to reach to its greatest height at the end of the century. He confidently expected that at the beginning of the next century it would be found that there had been a most serious diminution of revenue under the head of Death Duties, and at the same time a most serious increase of the hardships and injustices inflicted under that Act. Then the moment would have arrived for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to stand at that Table and call for a repeal of that Act and a return to the proper principles of taxation. He would like to give four sets of figures in corroboration and amplification of his conjecture that personalty under the Finance Act was likely to decrease year by year. He moved for and obtained a most valuable Return, showing the amount of personalty assessed in the last five years under seven distinct heads. In 1891-2, the influenza year, the total amount of personalty assessed under all heads was £410,000,000; in 1892-3, it was £367,000,000; in 1893-4, it was £350,000,000; in 1894-5, the first year of the Finance Act, it fell to £280,500,000; and in 1895-6, it fell to £273,700,000. What it would be for 1896-7 he did not know, but he ventured to predict a still further decrease. He must explain that this was the total amount of personalty assessed under every head, and some of it assessed twice or three times over. It did not represent the property. The sums he had named represented far more than the property which was assessed. It represented the total amount of personalty in each year on which they were enabled to assess duty, and consequently he claimed it as a fair figure for comparison between one year and another. The remarkable diminutions from year to year that had taken place since the passing of the Finance Act were such as to make even the right hon. Gentleman opposite reflect and, perhaps, in time, would cause him even to repent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave them three reasons why the Death Duties did not suffer so much last year as he had expected. There was a fourth reason, which he ventured to think was perhaps the greatest reason of all. That was the continued prevalence of high prices. The high prices of what were called "gilt-edged" securities had continued to a very large extent this year, but the moment there was a fall in those securities they would have a more than proportionate fall in such duties as the Death Duties, for the reason that those duties were more especially high upon the holders of these "gilt-edged" securities. Under the old system of death duties there was nothing so certain as that the estimate would be verified, or nearly so; but since the passing of the Finance Act a condition of the most absolute uncertainty had been created. There was a mistake in the Estimate of one and a half million last year, and of one million this year. Such a thing never occurred before.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Member forgets the Succession Duty of 1853, which never produced one-half what is was expected to produce. With regard to the Death Duty of 1894 it was estimated to produce one million in the first year, and it produced that sum within a few thousand pounds. It was estimated to produce ultimately four millions a year, and it has produced that sum almost exactly in both succeeding years. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the right hon. Gentleman could not ride off in that way. He began to suspect that the right hon. Gentleman was the author of a letter in *The Times* signed "H." [*Laughter.*] There was an accuracy of expression and at the same time an inaccuracy of suggestion in that letter which, at the time, made him think it might have been written by the right hon. Gentleman. He was now confirmed in that opinion. [*Laughter.*] In two years a mistake had been made in the Estimate.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Not by me.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was dealing with the years, not with the personages, and he asserted that the uncertainty that had attended these duties was most remarkable. He observed in the letter signed "H." the remark that, because the Death Duties last year were 14 millions, and this year nearly 14 millions, that showed how near an approximation it was to the original estimate. But the original estimate was not for this year or for last year; it was an estimate of the final outcome of the Death Duties. He was profoundly convinced that the Finance Act was calculated to produce year by year increasing uncertainties in the estimates of revenue as compared with the actual yield; and that when it came into full operation the amount derived would not be the 14 millions which the right hon. Gentleman expected, but a very much smaller sum, while the feeling of hardship entertained would be such as to force the House to reconsider what he could not but think an unfortunate fiscal change. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) expressed regret at the Chancellor of the Exchequer's allusion to the position occupied by the Crown lands in reference to the taxation and finance of the country. It was a return to the high Tory view which he thought had become extinct of recent years. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the payments in respect of agricultural rating having been considerably less than the estimate made by the Local Government Board. But the Local Government Board in issuing their Order acted under the instructions of the Treasury, whose assent was necessary under the Act. By the limit which was fixed the great mass of the small freeholders of the country were defrauded of the advantages which Parliament intended to give them. In a parish in his own constituency, where the rates were now 8s. 6d., and in the next half-year would be 9s. in the pound, there were 300 small freeholders who had, through the interposition of the Treasury in the preparation of the Local Government Board circular, been deprived of the benefits of the Rating Act. With regard to the Post Office reforms, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing with regard to the labour side of the Post Office problem. ["Hear, hear!"] The Post Office was the largest employer of direct labour in the world, and although there had been some improvement in recent years, yet the Post Office was far from occupying the position of a model employer. The effect of the proposed reforms would be that an additional weight would have to be carried in the rural districts. At the present time auxiliary postmen had to make long rounds in the early hours of winter mornings, starting with a weight of 35lb. He hoped that the Government in effecting their reforms would consider in a liberal spirit the services of these men. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I omitted to say that a considerable part of the sum I estimated will go in improving the position of the rural postmen, and undoubtedly some will go in providing carts where these are needed. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR C. DILKE said he was glad to have elicited that statement. With regard to the additional £200,000 to be spent in respect of our position as paramount Power in South Africa, he could not take the extremely serious view of that proposal that was taken by either the Leader of the Opposition or the Member for King's Lynn. If there was the remotest intention in the mind of the Government to embark on a war in South Africa, £200,000 would be merely a ridiculous item of expenditure. He believed that the South African Republic in the course of the year just expired had spent on warlike stores alone at least twice that sum. In face of that fact they would exaggerate if they were to anticipate that the Government intended war in South Africa. But, if in the minds of heated and excited writers in the Press there was any notion of the kind, they ought to be warned in time against the suggestion that this country would be likely to engage in a war which would be so profoundly unpopular as a war in South Africa for any but a very grave cause. Of course, if the South African Republic desired to drive this country into war there were steps which they might conceivably take which would render war between the two countries inevitable, but he felt persuaded that no such step would be taken by the Republic. Upon anything like a doubtful or confused issue such a war would be one of great unpopularity, and one in which the sympathies of all the Powers in the world would be opposed to this country. All he hoped was that Her Majesty's Government would by the prudence of their language—[*Opposition cheers*]—abstain, not in the interests of Party, but of the whole country, from giving the smallest colour or support to those excited utterances which occasionally found their place in the Press, and on the part of some of their less weighty supporters. [*Cheers.*] With regard to the £500,000 for the Navy, he was not able to look upon that provision as necessitated by the fresh events to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred. He had always held that our Navy should be predominant, not only over the two Powers usually named, but over other Powers besides. As he was one of those who found fault with the shipbuilding programme of the year on the ground of its insufficiency, he cordially supported and approved of the proposed expenditure of an additional amount. He only wished the sum proposed had been larger.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) expressed his regret at hearing the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his review of the last 60 years, rehearse almost word for word one of the stalest leaflets of the Cobden Club. [*Laughter.*] His right hon. Friend did not even incidentally refer to the introduction of steam and electricity and its applications, and he omitted to take cognisance of the fact that other countries which pursued a fiscal system precisely the opposite of our own had made relatively far greater progress. The Chancellor of the Exchequer talked of 700 millions sterling as representing the trade of this country. His right hon. Friend stepped very lightly over the fact that of that sum 441 millions consisted of imports—[*Opposition cheers*]—and only 240 millions of exports. In other words, we were 200 millions annually to the bad. [*Laughter.*] The First Lord of the Treasury himself must have seen, almost within the limits of his own constituency, mills being pulled down and the plant carted bodily to other countries. That meant that British capital was expended no longer in paying wages to British artisans, but to foreigners. He hoped this "redress of the balance," to which the First Lord of the Treasury referred in speeches outside, would be duly appreciated by the wage-earners of this country. The fact was no person who looked dispassionately at our financial position could say we were safe in going on piling expenditure on the top of expenditure, and continually relying exclusively upon our existing fiscal system. Did the Chancellor of the Exchequer think that expenditure in the future would be curtailed? He thought that it would rather be in the direction of expansion. And was it proposed in this event to add to the already high income tax? The Death Duties were not capable of expansion, and therefore the income tax was the only resource of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. He should like to see recourse had to sources of revenue which would provide money and give a stimulus to some of the trades and industries of the country. It was all very well to say that the working classes would not submit to any tax on the necessaries of life, but 4½ millions were already levied on articles which were not produced at home. From a financial point of view, these 4½ millions would be easily made up by a recurrence to a sounder system of finance. A duty of 2s. on corn would produce more than that now raised by the taxes on tea, coffee, cocoa, chicory, and dried fruits. Could any hon. Member say that the working classes would be injured by a transfer of these taxes from the one commodity to the other? This system of depending practically on one source of revenue for any further demands which might be made on the Exchequer was dangerous in the extreme, and he should not hesitate to urge at any time the desirableness of establishing a sounder system of finance.

MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) could not join in the pathetic remonstrance of his right hon. Friend. He did not find it to be a bad thing that we, by the exportation of 250 millions' worth of commodities should be able to get back 480 millions. It was rather a good bargain, and was a benefit to the wage-earners at home. Nor did he see that his right hon. Friend was justified in asserting that no one wanted to invest capital in this country. It was difficult to reconcile that statement with the fact that the rate of interest was lower in this country than in any other country. As to the suggestion that the working classes would gain by the imposition of a 2s. duty on corn, and a possible abolition of the duty on tea, coffee, and cocoa, he should like to see the working man who would accept the change. Personally he had not met him. He hoped that the greatest attention would be paid to the interesting comparison of the Chancellor of the Exchequer between the beginning of Her Majesty's reign and the finances of today. The revenue then was 53 millions, and the expenditure 52 millions. Now the expenditure was 104 millions. How was that expenditure allotted? Of the 52 millions at the beginning of the reign, 29 millions went in the involuntary charge of interest and cost of management of the debt; only 16 millions went to the Army and the Navy. [*Cheers.*] Now out of 104 millions something like 16 millions went to the cost of the interest and management of the debt, whereas the cost of the Army and Navy had risen from 16 millions to 42 millions, India being left out of account. In addition to that, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed out of the surplus to allot another half-million to the Navy. He held most strongly the necessity of upholding the Navy, and that it should be competent to meet any enemy or combination of enemies we had reasonably to encounter. He asked the Government and the right hon. Gentleman who had preceded them, however, whether there was no alternative policy possible save that of copying and emulating foreign Powers in the increase of our naval and military arms. As the late Lord Beaconsfield said years ago, the expenditure of a Government was the measure of its policy. A Government that developed a policy of mistrust would beget and multiply mistrust. Among civilised Powers there ought to be some method of negotiating and coming to agreement, and the first step to take to make that possible was to banish the sense of mistrust from one's mind. If we were not so suspected we might find other Powers ready to enter into satisfactory negotiations with us. Could we review the policy of Governments in recent years and read the language of Ministers of the Crown—he did not care on what side they were—and compare their policy and language with the policy and language of Ministers of the Crown at the beginning of the reign, without seeing that there had been a change for the worse, and that we were now constantly "biting our thumbs" at our neighbours, instead of cultivating friendly relations with them? Lord Salisbury was himself as cleanhanded in this matter as any man who had been engaged in public affairs for many years past, but there appeared to be a peaceful spirit running through that Legislature and the country, encouraged, he was sorry to say, by a similar spirit abroad, which was the justification and excuse for it here; and the way to meet that spirit abroad was to try to get rid of it ourselves. In the early part of the reign wiser and really more patriotic policy prevailed. It was this policy of mistrust—this policy of "biting our thumbs" at those with whom we happened for the moment not to be in cordial relations—which filled his mind with the greatest anxiety. With reference to the proposed expenditure of £200,000—in connection with which proposal they had had so deplorable a scene earlier in the evening—he had to say that that was a ridiculously small sum to ask for if the Government really contemplated war with the Transvaal. The expenditure involved in a policy of that kind would be measured by millions and not by tens of thousands. But if the Government did not contemplate something aggressive, why indulge in this petty display? [*Opposition cheers.*] He had been sorry to hear the Secretary for the Colonies refer to the money spent by the Transvaal Government in the erection of forts and in procuring artillery and munitions of war during the last 12 months. No doubt it was true that large sums of money had been so spent, but he did not believe that any person in South Africa dreamed that the Government of the Transvaal had any aggressive intentions—[*Opposition cheers*]—in that process of arming. [*Laughter.*] If Mr. Rhodes himself were here he would tell them that the Transvaal Government did not dream of making war. They were preparing to meet war, but they were not preparing to make war except by way of defence. They had no motive or desire for aggression. The reason why they were preparing for defence was, of course, largely explained by the fact that they had been attacked—[*Opposition cheers*]—and after the attack that had been made upon them such language as had been used by the hon. Member for King's Lynn that evening would not be regarded by them as indicating a friendly spirit. When language was employed such as they had heard in that Debate, could it be wondered at that there should be this inclination to arm on the part of the Boers? The demand of the Government for this £200,000, and the policy which appeared to accompany it, seemed to him to betoken some anticipation of what might be the results of the investigations of the South Africa Committee. He protested against the notion that they could promote peace in South Africa by uttering language of a hostile nature here, and making preparations which were wholly inadequate if war was contemplated. The members of the Cape House of Assembly without exception desired the maintenance of peace, and deprecated the suggestion of war. Whilst those were their views, they also deprecated the intervention of any foreign Power; but nobody in South Africa desired any foreign Power to intervene. Certainly the Government of the Transvaal Republic would not dream of bringing in a European Power to be their masters, or even to help them to fight Great Britain, for they valued their independence too highly. He did not wish to aggravate the situation by any words of his, and he was very sorry that they had anticipated a discussion which must be conducted in a more serious manner—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and with better preparation a few weeks hence; but he thought the Leader of the House would admit that the language which had been uttered justified some few words in reply. He regretted that they should have heard from the hon. Member for King's Lynn denunciations of a people with whom we were still in friendly relations. [Mr. Gibson Bowles: "I indulged in no denunciations!"] The hon. Member spoke of the insolence of the Transvaal Government and of repeated treaty violations, which the Boers denied.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that when he used the word "insolence" he was referring to the tone of certain dispatches from the Transvaal Republic. Their tone certainly did seem to him to justify the use of the word.

Mr. COURTNEY said that when the hon. Member talked about "insolence of tone," that was an appreciation of his own. The other side did not think their tone insolent. It was just to this certainty of conviction that we were always in the right and the other side always in the wrong that he demurred, for it was likely to aggravate a situation already sufficiently grave. ["Hear, hear!"]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I do not know by what unfortunate fate it is that the speeches of Gentlemen who wish to be thought the advocates of peace have always an effect so opposed to the speakers' declared intention. [*Cheers.*] I cannot imagine two speeches more calculated to aggravate and make more difficult the relations between this country and the Transvaal than the speech of the Leader of the Opposition and the speech of my right hon. Friend who has just sat down. The speech of the Leader of the Opposition has already been dealt with. As to the speech of my right hon. Friend, I am astonished that he should have thought it desirable to rise in his place as a supporter of the Government to explain that we cannot have the intention that we declare we have—the intention, namely, of sending out this small force for defensive purposes, and defensive purposes alone. [Mr. Courtney said that the right hon. Gentleman had not understood him correctly.] The right hon. Gentleman has many times assumed that the object of the Government was a provocative object. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman says that the step the Government are taking is useless for aggression, that it is not wanted for defence, and that it must, therefore, be intended for provocation. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. COURTNEY: I never used the word intended. I spoke of the fact, not of the design. People may engage in conduct which will produce consequences which they do not themselves intend or foresee.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Surely, if the right hon. Gentleman goes that length, anything more calculated to make this defensive action on the part of the Government to be regarded by the Boers as a deliberate act of provocation—anything more calculated to produce that result than his speech cannot be conceived. ["Hear, hear!"] As a matter of fact, he has done his best, I am sure unintentionally, by the speech he has just delivered, to inflame those feelings which all would desire to smooth, and to increase those difficulties which all would desire to allay; and instead of accepting frankly the statement of the Government that those troops were sent out of precaution alone, that we are absolutely innocent of any aggressive purpose, that we have no desire and never had any desire to do anything but maintain our actual existing and admitted rights, and that we of all people in the world would regard not merely as a national, but as a Party disaster the breaking out of war with the Transvaal, he has by his speech done his best to hide this purpose from the public. ["Hear, hear!"] The brief statement of policy which I have made represents accurately the tone and temper of the Government, and if the Committee and the country will only take it from me in the spirit in which I have made it, I am convinced that something, at all events, will have been done to promote the maintenance of that peace which, I can assure the right hon. Gentleman, he is not the only person in the House to desire. [*Cheers.*]

Sir W. HARCOURT: I am extremely glad to recognise the tone which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House has adopted. [*Cheers.*] I hope his statement will have the effect of healing the soreness which exists in this country, and, what is much more desirable, in South Africa. ["Hear, hear!"] But when I remember that a gentleman with whom I am personally acquainted and for whom I have the greatest respect, the other day before his constituents said that, from what he had heard and knew, there was going to be immediate war with the Transvaal—[*cries of* "Name!" *and a voice* "Williams"]—I will not mention any name, but I refer to a most respected Member of the Party opposite—when, I say, I remember that, I think the time has come when something should be said to remove that impression. That such an impression does exist at the Cape of Good Hope no one acquainted with the state of things there can doubt for a moment. Nobody can doubt that the language Mr. Rhodes has held both there and in this country tends in that direction. Nobody can doubt that within the last month or two the impression has existed that the policy of Mr. Rhodes in this matter has had the support of the Colonial Secretary, and I should be very glad to know that that is not the case. I am bound to say that my experience upon the South African Committee has led me to believe that it was a joint policy. The whole of the Debate in the Cape Parliament turned on that point, and one of the principal supporters of the Resolution that was moved in that Parliament said that the meaning of it was that "we do not mean to support the policy of Mr. Chamberlain." That was the impression—that the object was, I will not say invasion or aggression, but that the object was a policy of menace. ["Hear, hear!"] What my right hon. Friend opposite has said is perfectly true. He has spoken of the arming of the Boers. How can you wonder that they should be arming when it has been admitted before the Committee that Mr. Rhodes and Dr. Jameson had distinctly formed a plan for seizing the armaments of the Boers at Pretoria? ["Hear, hear!"] How can you wonder at their taking measures in self-defence? As to the idea that the Boers of the Transvaal intend to attack the British Government in South Africa, it is absurd. I am very glad to have heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and I hope that his disavowal will go out to the Cape. I welcome his healing words, and I hope they will convince the people of this country, and especially the people in South Africa, that England does not entertain any such suicidal and wicked policy as would encourage a racial war in South Africa, and which would be at once the greatest injury and disgrace to the Empire. ["Hear, hear!"] And remember this—the hon. Member for King's Lynn talked about breaches of the Convention. I have read the allegation of these breaches of the Convention, and to my mind they seem very doubtful; but, Sir, there is a breach of the Convention, the grossest and the most flagrant that ever occurred, and that is the breach of the Convention in the raid and in the promotion of an armed insurrection in Pretoria. ["Hear, hear!"] That has not yet been referred to. It seems to me that before we take the mote out of the eye of those in the Transvaal we had better take the beam out of our own eye. [*Cheers.*] I am extremely sorry that it was thought necessary to introduce this matter into the Budget. It is really no part of it. The natural course of proceeding would have been to settle the expenditure of the country on a general basis, and if there was any temporary necessity for an armament of this description, it would have been perfectly easy to have dealt with it by a supplementary Estimate. Why the general finances of the country should be embarrassed by such a thorny and difficult question as this I cannot imagine. We have had no explanation of it, and we cannot dispose of it now. ["Hear, hear!"] I am sorry I omitted in my former speech to express my approval of the reforms the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes in connection with the Post Office, but I only rose now to say that I welcome the tone of the language of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, and that I hope his words may be reported in South Africa. ["Hear, hear!"]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I wish first to say that, as there is some inconvenience in discussing this matter on the Budget, I will endeavour to give as early a Friday as possible for the introduction of a supplementary Estimate, when we can discuss the question in a regular manner. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.) said he rose to call attention to a question he had endeavoured to bring before the House by way of a Bill. The subject was no doubt familiar to many Members in consequence of the numerous petitions that had been received from traders in the country in reference to it—he meant the abolition of the plate licence. At present it was necessary for a trader to take out a licence before he could sell any article containing 6 dwt. of silver. The duty was in the nature of a restriction on trade, and of a kind of protection which both sides of the House would wish to see removed. It had been pointed out that the only two arguments in favour of the retention of the licence were that it limited dealing in gold and silver articles to a small number of persons, and that it assisted the police in the detection of persons who stole such articles. There could hardly be any justification for the continued imposition of a duty which produced the trivial sum of £50,000 a year, and which hindered trade in gold and silver articles. It moreover encouraged the production and importation into this country of shoddy articles of silver plate, which just saved the requirements of the revenue. He was at a loss to understand how there could be any opposition to the abolition of the duty, except on the part of the larger traders in these articles, who wished to keep the trade in their own hands. There was only one other point to which he wished to refer as representing a London constituency. He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have seen his way to raising the minimum on which the income tax would have to be paid. This was a matter which closely affected the working and middle classes, particularly numbers of poor traders. He did not think the Exchequer would lose much, seeing the cost of collection. He also suggested that the sale of cigars and tobacco should be allowed on the railways and omnibuses.

*Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said the hon. Member for Thanet, who had recently addressed the Committee, in saying that no one would invest a 6d. in this country, could hardly have read the admirable reports from the Board of Trade. There was a little book which came out every year, called the "Statistical Abstract," which hon. Gentlemen opposite ought to study. It showed that 17 millions had been invested during each of the last 15 years in one great industry—the railways of the United Kingdom, and yet the hon. Member for Thanet had said that there was no one who would invest a sixpence! With regard to the proposals of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer as regards Telegraphs and Post Office, he was sure they would be welcomed throughout the country. There were many trades suffering as well as agriculture. What they were most suffering from was, he would not say the policy of Her Majesty's Government, but the unsettled state of Eastern Europe, which had no doubt done great damage to trade. But for that they would have been still more prosperous. He was glad to hear his right hon. Friend say that he did hope that some of this expenditure, which he so much regretted, would come to an end some day—that expenditure which, as the hon. Member for Bodmin said, they were constantly demanding for naval and military affairs, an expenditure which had gone up from 16 to 40 millions. Now, no sooner is there a small surplus than £500,000 of it is handed over to the Admiralty in order to continue those armaments which were so detrimental to the peace of the world. He agreed with the Leader of the Opposition that it is an enormous pity that the £200,000 for additional troops to the Cape, which in itself is neither here nor there, was named at all as an item in the Budget. He feared that it was a fatal mistake, especially after the cross-examination in the Committee taken up so warmly by the Secretary for the Colonies, and the papers and letters written upon it. He was afraid this would tend rather to the war of the world than the peace of the world. ["Hear, hear!"] Whenever these increases were made here, they saw at once the foreign papers urging their Governments to follow the course that England was taking. He believed these countries watched and followed the course that

England might take—if we built more ships they followed suit—if we were to adopt another policy, in all probability that policy might and would be adopted by them. This Budget of £103,000,000 was to give 42½ millions of it to the purposes of the Army and Navy. As to the subsidies to local taxation from Imperial funds, he thought every Chancellor of the Exchequer deplored the thing in principle, for the principle appeared to him utterly wrong—["hear, hear!"]—and was actually raised by taxation upon the lower middle and working classes to save taxation, which would otherwise fall on those more able to bear the burden.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon) believed that the postal and telegraph changes would prove of great advantage, not only to the upper classes but to a large extent to the working classes, especially in sparsely-inhabited districts. He wished particularly to thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction in the rates as to parcels. Up to now the rates in this country were larger than in other countries, notably in France and Germany, which were largely competing countries with us. The proposed reduction would place them in a better position than France was, but not better than Germany. We should not be in as good a position as the Germans, but it must be remembered that the German Government required that post waggons should run free of charge, and, therefore, the rate for parcels could be considerably reduced. Taking that into consideration they had every reason to be satisfied and gratified with the changes announced to-night, changes which affected both the agricultural and commercial classes. The changes would do a great deal to bring producers of dairy articles and consumers nearer together, with a result beneficial to both classes. He did not think the Government or the House generally recognised to what a large extent commerce was carried on by means of the Parcels Post. Only the other day he learned that one firm, a Member of which sat in this House, sent every day 1,300 parcels by Parcels Post. He trusted that the advantages they had heard of to-night would soon be extended to the foreign Parcels Post, and they had every reason to believe that would be the case. That certainly would go a long way towards helping us to compete with producers abroad. He did not suppose that in consequence of such a change the commerce of England would reach the point his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Sheffield desired to see it attain, but that and other similar reforms would greatly assist English commerce in its international transactions. Before he resumed his seat he desired to express regret that it had not been possible to reduce the income tax by a penny at least. If we embarked in war we must look very largely to the income tax to bear the burden, and if in time of peace we kept the tax at war rate what were we to do when we had to meet the expense of a war? A 6d. income tax was bearable, but an 8d. tax was always unbearable in time of peace. He was certain it would be wise to reduce the income tax to 6d., so that we might be in a sounder financial position if we had to go to war. One, however, could not help being satisfied at the ease with which the country bore the present enormous expenditure. It was only a few years ago that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite were denounced for proposing an expenditure of £80,000,000. The expenditure during next year was estimated at £101,000,000, and the country appeared to be able to bear it with the greatest ease. No testimony to the country's prosperity could be greater than that.

*MR. ALBERT SPICER (Monmouth Boroughs) rose to express gratification at the wonderful statement as to the financial condition of the country which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put before the House. He believed that statement would impress the vast majority of hon. Members with the wisdom of those who made this country one of free imports. From one remark which fell from the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield it would seem that he at least was still unconverted. [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: "Hear, hear!"] He was afraid that the hon. and gallant Gentleman and those who thought with him did not pay sufficient heed to the enormous increase of home consumption. He was connected with a branch of commerce that had to meet a great deal of foreign competition, but he believed that if a return could be obtained of the gross tonnage produced by home manufactures 20 years ago as compared with to-day, it would be found that in spite of foreign competition the industry of which he spoke had made enormous advance. He listened to that part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech which dealt with postal reforms with peculiar pleasure. He felt that hitherto the improvements in postal arrangements had chiefly benefited the large towns, and, therefore, he was glad that now the rural districts were to be benefited. There was one suggestion he had to make, and that was that the Post Office authorities should take into consideration the advisability of carrying passengers in those districts unprovided with the ordinary means of conveyance. In many districts of the Continent the Post Office provided passenger carrying accommodation, an example which he felt could with advantage be imitated here.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said that unfortunately he had not heard the whole of the speech of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and more especially that part in which he referred to the views which he himself, in common with many others, had long held. He had heard the greater part of the statement, however, and he was very much disappointed that his right hon. Friend did not take advantage of the present opportunity to do something for the manufactures and industries of the country. The postal reforms would very possibly do something in this direction, but they must not forget that the present Government was pledged to devote itself as far as it could to fostering the interests of industry and labour in the country. He pointed out that in 1841 the Customs duties, raised upon nine classes of articles, amounted to £23,341,000, while in the present year, 21½ millions were to be raised upon eight classes of articles. The right hon. Member for the Bodmin division of Cornwall had taken exception to the suggestions which were made by his right hon. Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet, and expressed the opinion that the working men of this country would not tolerate any such system as he advocated. He would refer the right hon. Member for the Bodmin division to a newspaper published in his constituency, the *Cornwall Gazette.* On the occasion of a dinner of the Cobden Club last year, at which the right hon. Member took the chair, that newspaper published the following passage:—

> "The iron industry is decaying, and America, which adheres to the fallacy of Protection, is rapidly beating us out of the field. In cutlery, England was mistress of the markets of the world some 14 years ago; in 1894 our exports were short of two millions in value, while German exports were in the neighbourhood of four millions. Our cotton exports in the same year were nearly eight millions less than in 1874, and our exports of woollen goods in 1874 were 28 millions as against 18 millions in 1894, whilst we imported these goods to the value of 11 millions. Our import of silk goods is eight times greater than our exports. Our sugar industry has been destroyed by foreign bounties. The McKinley tariff is killing our tin-plate manufacture. It is such facts as these that one looks to Mr. Courtney to explain."

He would suggest that the right hon. Member should consult the opinion of the working men in his own constituency on the subject. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in detailing the progress which had been made in many respects during the present reign, had altogether ignored the relatively greater progress which had been made by foreign nations under an entirely different system. An official Paper laid upon the Table in 1891 by his right hon. Friend, who was then President of the Board of Trade, showed that while each £100 of English foreign trade in 1854 became under the free import system £276 15s. 6d. in 35 years, in the principal Continental nations, under a system of Protection, each £100 in the same period became £364 10s. 1d. That showed that foreign nations under an entirely different fiscal system had in the last 35 years made relatively much greater progress than we had. The present system was entirely against the investment of capital in this country. He contended that his right hon. Friend the Member for Thanet was absolutely right when he said that the present condition of affairs tended to diminish the investment of capital in labour-employing British enterprises. The hon. Baronet who sat for one of the divisions of Durham cited against this the £800,000,000 sterling which was invested in the railways of this country, and he considered these were manufacturing enterprises. He did not minimise the great benefits which the railways were to the country, but they gave preferential rates to foreigners, carrying foreign goods for less than they carried British produce, arable or manufacturing. In the construction of the new railway from Waterloo to the City the rolling stock was being obtained from abroad and the labour from America. He admitted that the present fiscal system was exceedingly advantageous to people with fixed incomes, who could obtain luxuries at far less cost than they would otherwise be able to do, but to people whose capital consisted of their labour, and who had to work for their daily bread, it was injurious in the highest degree. In 1841, 934,000 persons were in receipt of outdoor relief, and in spite of our vaunted prosperity the number still was 817,000. Then one in three of the population over 65 was in receipt of Poor Law relief. These were matters which in prosperous times should receive more attention from the Government. Arable land was going out of cultivation, and large numbers of the rural population were driven to the towns to obtain a living, swelling the competition in the labour market there. He believed that a registration fee upon grain coming into this country would be exceedingly popular and would tend to increase the employment of the rural population. These were not views which he reserved for the House of Commons. They were views which he freely held and had conferred with his constituents upon. His constituents were an absolutely working class and industrial community, and they saw most clearly that the present condition of affairs was full of evil, if not of great danger for the future, as regarded the poorer and the working class population. He earnestly hoped that in his next Budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer would endeavour to do something to remedy this condition of affairs. Lord Rosebery himself had called serious attention to the decline of British trade and the increase of foreign rivals. The revenue raised by Customs Duties was scarcely less than 50 years ago. But the revenue raised was entirely paid by the consumer, because none of the articles upon which it was raised could possibly be produced in this country, and he appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider whether the transfer of these duties to articles competing with our own trade and labour, instead of articles which do not compete with it, and upon which duties have to be paid entirely by the consumer, would not be more advantageous to the country at large.

Mr. W. ALLAN (Gateshead) regretted to hear the speech just delivered. He should have thought the recent dictum of the First Lord of the Treasury against Protection would have satisfied him, and that he would no longer have trotted out that bogey. He failed to find anything practical in the speeches either of the right hon. Member for Thanet or the hon. Member who had just spoken. The former talked about the material produced in other countries out-cutting British merchants and manufacturers, and he pictured the absolute ruin of British manufacturers. What were the facts of the case? Take the jute trade. It was thought at one time that by erecting mills in India, where jute was grown, manufacturers could outsell the British market, and especially the Dundee market. Dundee was peculiarly the centre of the jute trade; it was called "Juteopolis." [*A laugh.*] Certain capitalists went to India and built jute mills. They employed native labour, and ran their employés night and day, and worked them hours which would not be tolerated in any civilised country, to make dividends. Had they outcut Dundee? The manufacture of jute yielded as much profit as ever in Dundee. It could be manufactured cheaper in Dundee than in India, and wages were better in Dundee than ever. Whereas formerly jute operatives got £1 a week, they were now getting 34s. Then take shipbuilding. We licked the German shipbuilders into fits. [*Laughter.*] While our youths were learning their trade the young Germans were conscripts, serving their time in the army, and the result was our workmen could knock in two rivets to their one. What, then, was the use of talking about our trade going to the dogs? Take Norway and Sweden. We paid higher wages than were paid in those countries, and worked shorter hours, and their workmen could not touch ours. Then there was the iron and steel trade. Belgium was often held up as running this country very hard. He admitted that it was in some things. But as to rails, girders, and beams, we could undersell them and beat them on their own ground, although our workmen worked shorter hours and received better wages. Take coal-mining in the Rhine Valley. Why did we send hundreds and thousands of tons of coal to Germany if they could produce the coal cheaper? They could not do it, and, although our pitmen got higher wages, we could beat Germany in shipments of coal. Our pitmen could get two tons out of the ground while they were getting one. He pointed out that the cry of "Made in Germany" was likely to inflict injury on English manufacturers and workmen. As an instance of this he mentioned the case of an English engineering firm which had practically secured a repeat order for engines to be erected in a German manufactory, when the workmen told the employers they would strike if they made any more English machinery for Germany. If this cry were to be persisted in they would have other countries retaliating with the phrase, "Made in England," and decline to receive goods manufactured in this country. ["Hear, hear!"] In the genuine British stuffs for which this country was famous, such as cloths, engines, ships, machinery and large manufactures, no other nation could touch us. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member wanted to tax grain, but that was a thing which the working classes would never stand, while it ought to be the duty of every Government to give the necessaries of life at the lowest possible cost to the nation. Even if grain were taxed wages would not rise as a consequence, because during the time of the heavy tax on grain workmen received less wages than they did now. He protested against the trotting out of this played-out bogey of protection, which was dead and buried, and which would never be resurrected again while the British people had common sense. ["Hear, hear!"]

***Mr. B. L. COHEN** (Islington, E.) observed in the intensely interesting statement of his right hon. Friend there was one subject to which he made no reference, and to which he believed the country was expecting him to allude. He meant the rate of interest on Post Office Savings Bank deposits. On the 26th February his right hon. Friend stated that he had the matter under consideration, because it was clear the present regulations could not continue. He did not consider the matter immediately urgent, as it was only this year that a deficit had been shown on the account, and that was only small. But in the Trustee Savings Banks, as the House knew, there had been a deficit, which increased each year, for many years. His object, however, in raising the subject was because he desired, as he thought his right hon. Friend did, to do nothing which would discourage national thrift, nor which would divert the savings of the artisan classes to less sound investments, and because he was convinced the sooner the subject was taken in hand the less drastic would be the changes which his right hon. Friend would find it necessary to make. For example, at the present moment, out of 6,453,000 accounts opened at the Post Office Savings Banks there were only 248,943 above £100, and the deposits of these accounts amounted to £38,500,000 out of the £112,000,000 which was the present total of the Post Office Savings Bank Deposits. One half per cent. reduction on accounts of over £100 would give nearly £200,000, which was so much above the probable loss for a long time to come, that for the present, at any rate, if the matter were taken in hand at once, it would probably suffice to reduce the rate of interest only on accounts of over £150. What they all wanted was to protect the small depositors. It was for these the Post Office Savings Banks were primarily designed, and it was in their interest that he hoped his right hon. Friend would take the matter soon in hand. There was no question of "charity," to use the term of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 26th February. A small alteration, if enacted soon, would give the Exchequer all that was needed, and would protect the taxpayer from loss which, of course, he should not be called on to bear on account of the Savings Banks.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) desired, on the other hand, to thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for not having listened to the advice of the hon. Member who had just spoken, to reduce the interest on Post Office Savings Bank deposits. He earnestly hoped the right hon. Gentleman would persist in this refusal, and continue to pay the same rate of interest on these small deposits, giving the depositor the excellent security of the Government. The Banks, it seemed, were not satisfied with making the huge profits they now made, but wanted also to deprive the poor people of the advantage they had got in these excellent institutions of the Government. He fully approved of the announcement which the right hon. Gentleman had been able to make with regard to the improvements in the Post Office service, which would bring that institution into harmony with rival institutions abroad. He hoped that careful consideration would be given to the labour questions which would arise in carrying out the improvements. Turning to the Budget itself, he was greatly disappointed in it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that the finances of the country had reached the largest amount they had ever reached. New taxes which were imposed two or three years ago were only just coming into full bearing now. In addition, they had great and splendid trade, producing the flourishing condition of the revenue, and yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer managed to fritter away all these splendid resources without giving any advantage in the Budget to any class in the community. He repudiated the remark of the right hon. Gentleman that of all the spending departments in this country the most expensive was the House of Commons. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer made that remark about the extravagance of the House of Commons (for which there was no foundation) he knew the right hon. Gentleman was going to suggest some extravagance of his own, and he did. He told them the First Lord of the Admiralty had threatened them with a further increase of the Navy Estimates, and had said that if a certain other Power built war ships the Government would have to take notice of it. Was that the extravagance of the House of Commons? Certainly not. It was the greed of the Departments which sat beside the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had already provided 22½ millions for the Navy, and why, therefore, provide another £500,000 out of the £1,250,000 of the surplus which he had left? He deprecated such a frittering away of the surplus. He was glad to hear the remarks of the right hon. Member for Bodmin with regard to this Naval matter. He would like to point out that a great responsibility rested upon the House, because they had the strongest Navy in the world, and if they chose to pause in the building of war ships then other countries would do the same. It was the one that was the strongest that ought to stop first. They started on one of those foolish shipbuilding programmes ten years ago. Since then they had spent nearly £50,000,000, and they had scarcely improved their relative position. The effect of their naval programme was to stimulate other countries to go on, and the farther they went the farther would other countries go. They had had this year the heaviest Army Estimates and the heaviest Navy Estimates. They had had an Army Loan Bill, and they were going to have a Navy Loan Bill, and then this little half-million, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have spent in so many useful ways, he chucked to these "dogs of war," to which so many other millions had gone. He would only refer to the expenditure of £200,000 on the South African expedition to say that he thanked the Leader of the House for the excellent language in which he referred to it. Nothing could be more desirable, and he hoped the Government would stand firm in its determination. The broad case he had against the Budget was that, while they had the largest resources that this country had ever shown, no reduction whatever had been made in the taxes. He was afraid the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was a little to blame for the extravagance of the present Government. He blamed himself for praising the Budget of 1894 in too enthusiastic a manner. It was only the principle of that Budget that he was entirely in favour of, and not the way in which the money raised by that excellent principle had been frittered away. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not reduced taxation. He believed a great many people had begun to think this had gone a great deal too far, and that, in a time of perfect peace, and when the natural increase of expenditure was so great, they might afford to dispense with some of the taxation put on in 1894. He believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer had again wilfully under-estimated the revenue in order that there might be a surplus next year, and in order to avoid the necessity of taking off any taxes. They ought to have a more careful estimate than they had, and he should be glad to see a change made in this respect. The most interesting part of the Chancellor's speech was the comparison he made with 60 years ago. He there treated the finances of the United Kingdom as a whole, but, personally, he thought it was time that, in the national treatment of finance, they had some reference made regularly to Ireland, because everything in their national finances which was going in one direction in Great Britain was going in the opposite direction so far as Ireland was concerned. The Chancellor pointed out that in 1837 the total revenue of the country was £52,000,000, and that now it was about £102,000,000. The population had also doubled, and wealth had far more than doubled, so that the burden of this greater taxation fell with infinitely less weight than it did 60 years ago. But look at the Irish figures. In 1837 the Irish taxation was about £4,000,000. It was now £8,000,000, though the population had sunk to one-half and wealth had diminished in proportion to the diminution of the population. So that in Ireland to-day they were really collecting the taxes that they ought to collect if there was a population of 15 or 16 millions in the country. He asked the House to notice this extraordinary contrast between the two countries—a contrast which, in his opinion, made the greatest tragedy which existed in any civilised country. That was a tragedy for which that House alone was responsible, and it cast the darkest shadow which would be cast on this splendid reign. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also said that in 1837 indirect taxation was 71 per cent., and to-day it was only 44 per cent. It was scarcely candid of the right hon. Gentleman to make that statement. In Ireland to-day the indirect taxation was 75 per cent. They were worse off to-day than they were in 1837. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was a great deal of smuggling in 1837. Wherever they found smuggling, it was the desperate effort of people who could not pay the taxes to get hold of commodities without paying taxes. [*Cries of* "No!"] The right hon. Gentleman said this smuggling had practically disappeared. As regarded Great Britain, yes; but if he had looked into the Inland Revenue returns for last year he would have seen that cases of smuggling in Ireland had increased in the last year to 1,388 from 1,107. The right hon. Gentleman then said they had taken the taxes off thousands of articles. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: "Hundreds!"] Well, hundreds; and taxed alcohol, tea, and tobacco. They had, and that was how they had ruined and plundered the Irish. ["Oh!"] He would make good his point, but if he had used an offensive expression he would at once withdraw it. The relief given by taking off the taxes did not extend in anything like the same proportion to Ireland as to England. There were a great many articles taxed, not exactly in 1837, but 10 or 15 years previously, and that was just the same because the present system of finance commenced in 1817. There were a great many articles including necessaries of life, such as soap, bricks, and glass, taxed. The total tax on those articles about 1821 was 23s. 7d. per head of the population of Great Britain; it was 2s. 6d. in Ireland. To-day there was only 7d. collected in Great Britain and 4d. in Ireland. Ten times more relief had been given in Great Britain than in Ireland. It was by such means that the burden had been shifted on to the shoulders of Ireland. The whole of the Irish tragedy had been created in this reign. In 1837 the taxation per head of the population in Ireland was 13s. 6d., in 1897 it was 53s. The taxation had been doubled and quadrupled in Ireland while it had been reduced in Great Britain. Let him give figures to show how Ireland had been hardly dealt with. The taxation to-day on all forms of alcohol per head of the population in England was 16s. 8d., in Scotland 21s. 1d., and in Ireland 14s. 11d. If beer, whisky and wine were taxed at the same rate as in 1829, the tax would be, in England 26s. 6d., in Scotland 14s. 11d., and in Ireland 10s. 2d. The change then that had been made since 1829 had taken 9s. 10d. per head off the Englishman's drink, and had added 6s. 2d. per head to the Scotchman's drink, and 4s. 9d. per head to the Irishman's drink. To put it in another way, suppose that the spirit in drinks were taxed as the spirit in whisky was taxed, then England would pay £2 2s. per head, Scotland £1 8s. 10d., and Ireland £1 6s. 3d. To put it in a third way, suppose that the spirit in all alcoholic drinks were taxed as the spirit in beer was taxed, England would pay 9s. per head, Scotland 6s. 2d., and Ireland 6s. 7d. He desired to point the moral. England had managed the finances, and what had she done? She had cheapened her own drink and increased the tax on the Scotchman's and Irishman's drink. The taxation was not based on any intelligible principle. The principle England had adopted was to cheapen the stuff Englishmen like, and to put an increased tax on the stuff the other fellows like. By any honest principle the Englishman would have paid most, because he drank most. The English consumption of alcohol in the year was equal to 4 gallons of proof spirit; the Scotch to 2¾ gallons, and the Irish to 2½ gallons. Why this arrangement had borne so hardly on Ireland was, that the taxation had been constantly raised. He would admit that the tax was raised by the late Government and not by the present. [*Ironical cheers.*] It was indeed quite tragic that the Government which came in to do justice to Ireland had left in Ireland as the sole permanent monument of its existence four new taxes. The Inquiry which the Government had promised was delusive, because the injustice was still going on. Since the last Commission was appointed in 1894 the taxation in Ireland had been raised by £600,000. In the last financial year eight millions were collected from Ireland—a larger amount than had been ever collected before in one year. There would be great disappointment in Ireland that the right hon. Gentleman had made no reference to the case of Ireland, for the Debate on the Financial Relations was regarded as quite unsatisfactory. He would like the right hon. Gentleman to explain one phrase in his speech. The right hon. Gentleman said that the questions raised with reference to the financial relations might have to be dealt with, and they were very large matters. That was a much more sympathetic utterance than anything in the right hon. Gentleman's previous speech, and he hoped that it meant something.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I said after a full inquiry, which will, of course, be conducted by the Commission we are going to appoint.

Mr. LOUGH hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would not shut his mind to the very grave questions raised. If a common system were applied to two countries so different as Ireland and England, a great injustice must be done to one country. He did not wish to disturb the excellent fiscal system in Great Britain; but he did desire separate treatment for Ireland. It was said that that would involve the re-establishment of the Irish Customs House, abolished in 1847. But that would only be a nominal Customs House. He did not desire to interfere with the principle of free trade; but such a Customs House was necessary to adjusting the financial grievances, because by that means only could the true state of Irish trade be discovered. At present the Irish trade Returns were mixed up with the English. If the true facts were known, such a pathetic state of poverty would be revealed that the House would no longer hesitate to do full justice to Ireland. He did not ask that Great Britain should in any way pay for Ireland, but only that Ireland should not be taxed remorselessly, as she was in the present Budget, and regardless of the fact that her wealth and population had disappeared. Direct taxation required no Custom House, and the Government could abolish the income tax in Ireland. [*Ironical laughter.*] The details which were given in the Inland Revenue Return as to the collection of income tax afforded striking evidence as to the truth of the proposition that it was a most unsuitable tax to Ireland. In Great Britain the bulk of the income tax was levied on trade, and here it was more suitable for trade than Irish land. It was a British tax, and it was a great mistake ever to have extended it to Ireland. It was also a great pity that the Irish case had not received some attention from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, though there had been a rumour that the right hon. Gentleman was going to apply the Agricultural Rating Act to Ireland. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had taken no step in that direction, and he thought that the financial statement as a whole would be received with considerable regret by the great mass of the people.

Mr. C. J. MONK (Gloucester) while congratulating the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the extreme simplicity of his Budget regretted that he had not seen his way to abolish the small and anomalous tax on plate. The amount was only £55,000, and the tax fell mainly on the poor watchmakers. It was their unanimous desire to have the tax taken off, though he believed the jewellers wished it to be maintained, though this was hardly in a spirit of fair competition. The tax was imposed in 1758, and it appeared to him to be extraordinary that it had not long ago been abolished. It was now too late to make an appeal to his right hon. Friend, but he hoped the question would be considered another year. The tax had been condemned over and over again, and it had been brought to the notice of various Chancellors of the Exchequer during many years.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he regretted that during the greater part of his hon. Friend's speech there was not a single Member from Ireland present to express approval or assent to the propositions he had made. He wished, however, to remind the Committee, as a Scotch Member, that they in Scotland had a great grievance which must arise at a later stage of the Budget discussion, and that was as to the appropriations of the equivalent grant in connection with the English grant to education. If it was the intention of the Government to give a grant in aid to Voluntary Schools in Scotland, and to ignore and repudiate the principle of their equivalent grant, he had no hesitation in saying that the Scottish Members would be unanimous in resisting that mode of dealing with their claim. Turning to the bearing of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's financial statement on the Navy, he did not accept the account which his hon. Friend the Member for West Islington had given of the history of the naval proposals in the House this Session. He did not admit that the demand made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was one that was being forced on the House by the Admiralty or the Government. They had strong grounds for saying that the proposition was being forced on the Government and the Admiralty by the prevailing sentiment of the House of Commons. He repudiated the notion that the demand for this extra half million for the naval service was a demand which had been thrust upon the House of Commons by the Admiralty. He believed the opposite to be much nearer the truth. When the First Lord of the Admiralty submitted his naval Estimates to the House one most important fact was not made apparent, but was brought out by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean and himself. The casual observer would have imagined that there was no diminution in the Estimates in the provision for new construction, and yet, as a matter of fact, there had been an enormous reduction in the cash provision for new construction. It so happened that the naval plans of the Government for the present year were first published in extraordinarily minute detail in a newspaper early in the Session. The only respect in which the newspaper was wrong was in regard to new construction, and everybody came to the conclusion that after the information was supplied to the newspaper there must have been some change in the plans of the Government respecting new construction. When he examined the Estimates he came to the conclusion that instead of keeping up new construction to the standard already existing the Government had reduced the cash provision for that purpose by a very large sum, approaching a million. That night they had before them a proposal which had surprised many Members. The deficiency was being made good, and £500,000 was to be devoted to new construction. He raised no objection to that, but he thought it right to draw attention to the fact that there was a deficiency at the beginning of the Session, which deficiency was now being supplied. The First Lord of the Admiralty, when the Estimates were under consideration, had uttered a kind of *obiter dictum* to the effect that the Government held themselves free to propose new construction if there should be any great development of new programmes in other countries. Now the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained that the £500,000 for new construction was required because other nations were pushing forward their naval programmes. This declaration cast upon the First Lord of the Admiralty the obligation of showing that since the Navy Estimates were presented there had been a development abroad not of paper, but of real naval programmes. There was another point which called for remark. Two months ago they were given to understand that there was to be a new Naval Works Loans Bill this year, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that evening that the Admiralty had not spent nearly all the money to which it was entitled under the second Naval Works Act, which gave to the Admiralty, without limit of time, the power of spending 2½ millions upon naval works. During the past year the Admiralty, he understood, had only spent some £830,000 of this money, so there must be an unexpended balance of 1¾ million. How then came it to be necessary to have a new Naval Works Loan Bill this year? The Opposition, even if they did not object to that Bill or to the Military Works Loans Bill, were entitled to point out that the country would not have been driven to borrow money for urgent military and naval purposes if the Government had not squandered so much of their surplus in aiding special classes of the community. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] If he had spoken earlier in the evening, he would have been tempted to allude to what he might call the inflamed discussion which took place some hours ago as to the policy of the Government in South Africa. He had, however, heard with the greatest satisfaction that a speech had been made by the Leader of the House which put an entirely new aspect on the subject, and which made it incumbent upon him to keep silence on the subject until it could be brought up in a formal way. He would only say that he was alarmed by the terms in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced this additional military expenditure in South Africa, because the right hon. Gentleman appeared to connect it with the enforcement of what he called our treaty rights. He could not help connecting that statement with the deplorable letter from the Colonial Secretary, dated March 6, which appeared in the last Blue-book, and in which one of the alleged breaches of the Convention was referred to. He would ask the Committee to allow him to read a single sentence from that letter:—

> "2. The Accession of the South African Republic to the Geneva Convention.—After Dr. Jameson's raid, owing to a report made by the St. John's Ambulance Association, Her Majesty's Government determined to invite the South African Republic to accede to the Geneva Convention, and the necessary instructions were sent to Sir J. de Wet, who, however, omitted to carry them out. The South African Republic on September 30th formally communicated to the Swiss Government, through their representative at the Hague, their act of accession to the Geneva Convention. Her Majesty's Government, in the circumstances, did not hesitate to convey the Queen's approval, but the action of the Government of the Republic none the less constituted a breach of the London Convention."

[*Ministerial cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheered that. As a matter of law and common sense he challenged them to deny, first of all, that the approval of Her Majesty ratified any previous irregularities; and, secondly, that in this particular case the act they objected to as a breach of the Convention—

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS pointed out that the hon. Member was now going into details relating to a Blue-book the consideration of which, by the common consent of the Committee, had been deferred to a later day. Of course, he had no power to prevent the hon. Member from going into the matter.

Sir W. HARCOURT said he had never heard of any such common consent of the Committee. There was a demand in this Budget for £200,000 for increasing the military armaments at the Cape, and unless that demand was withdrawn from the Budget the Committee could not be prevented from discussing it. [*Cheers.*]

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said he had stated that, as a point of order, he could not stop the hon. Member from going into the matter; but, now that he was challenged on the matter he was bound to say that it was irrelevant at the present stage to go into the minute details of a Blue-book, and, therefore, he must request the hon. Member to desist from going into them. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. E. ROBERTSON said that any request from the Chair would always meet with his approval. All he had to say about the matter was that he hoped that it was not one of the reasons that had led to this increased military expenditure that the Transvaal Republic had done what Her Majesty's Government had asked them to do. Such a position was too ridiculous to be taken up. [*Cheers.*] In conclusion he would only say that he had listened with the greatest admiration to the financial statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He could hardly find language adequate to express his admiration of both the statements the right hon. Gentleman had made. He could only hope that influences such as his might prevail in the Party of which, at the present time, he was the chief ornament. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square) said that the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down said he should not enter into any discussion of the incident which had previously taken place, and they watched him proceeding. They arrived at the conclusion that he was not a bad disciple of the Member for Monmouthshire. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government had no wish to shrink from the discussion, but he should not be surprised if many Members opposite repudiated the action of their Leaders. [*Opposition cries of* "No!"] The hon. Member said he should only read a single extract from the Dispatch. It was unfair to pick out one extract from one Dispatch and say it was a *casus belli.* A more outrageous proceeding he had never heard. [*Cheers.*] Perhaps it was a mere rhetorical flight of the hon. Member; he called it a deplorable matter, and then he did not enter into a general discussion. He was glad of the intervention of the Member for Monmouthshire, as it would give him an opportunity of saying a few words which he otherwise would not have been able to say. With regard to the naval question, he had told the hon. Member before—and he would ask him to do him the honour of accepting his statement as true—that there was no change whatever in the programme initiated by Her Majesty's Government even before the commencement of this year. Against that the hon. Member quoted a statement in a newspaper, forgetting that when he was in office there was purloined information. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member suggested that there was some change of front in regard to their Estimates, and in support of this he quoted the statement in the newspaper. For that statement there was not a single atom of foundation. There had been no change whatever in their programme. The Chancellor of the Exchequer granted the money asked for by the Admiralty. They had their programme completed long before. The next point was that their new construction had been diminished by a million; but this was a mistake, and the hon. Member had been misled by the intricacies which prevailed in all naval Estimates. As to the hon. Member's statement that the £500,000 was grantd in consequence of some *obiter dictum* of his in reply to an hon. Member as to the abnormal efforts in other directions, it was notorious that naval expenditure had been increased not by paper programmes. If the hon. Member challenged him it might be necessary to explain; but he trusted that he would not take that particular course. He should be sorry to have to enumerate the grounds on which Her Majesty's Government had felt it to be their duty to ask for this increase. ["Hear, hear!"] He hoped the hon. Member would not press for this precise information; but he could assure the Committee it had not been an afterthought that this £500,000 had been asked for. He had examined the comparative expenditure of European countries, and it was on that examination that they had made this additional Estimate. Then there was a reference as to the Naval Works Bill; but the sum mentioned did not represent what was expended in any particular year. They had not spent all that they expected to spend, and that money would be available this year. It was distinctly stated last year that there would be a sum for new works. There was in contemplation new work and additional expenditure on Dover Harbour, and for that purpose a new Bill was required. It would be introduced before long; but the surveys had taken some time to complete, and the Admiralty were anxious not to come before the House asking for money until they were able to submit definite figures on the subject. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had brought forward in his able speech reasonable proposals, but of no great magnitude. He wished the right hon. Gentleman in his able Budget speech had included one dealing with the Stamps on Bonds, and shares to bearer and on Bills of Exchange. On a former occasion he brought his views before the House and to the notice of Sir Alfred Milner, who did not differ with them. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would in the near future equalise those duties and modify them. By so doing he would increase the revenue and facilitate trade. Bonds were treated very unequally as regards stamps. Some were charged with 10s. per £100, others, including Colonial, 2s. 6d. per £100, while an immense quantity were entirely free from Stamp Duty. The 10s. duty on Bonds issued in this country and on certain Bonds delivered here was too high. It led to evasion, or to the diversion of trade to rival countries. In either case the Exchequer suffered. If evidence of evasion or legal avoidance of this duty was required, the India Office could supply it. Many millions of Bonds issued by the Indian Government were free of Stamp Duty. Others indirectly issued by them with their direct guarantee paid 2s. 6d. and 10s. per £100. There were in existence about £13,000,000 of this class of security on which the high duty of 10s. had been paid. In order to avoid the charge for Stamps on a fresh issue, the Bonds falling due were renewed whenever possible. If the rate of interest was changed the old Bond was still retained, and fresh coupon sheets were attached. This system would continue so long as this high duty was imposed, or until the Bond was worn out. If the duty were reduced to 5s. it might suit the companies to pay off the old Bonds with available funds, and issue later on fresh Bonds when the Money Market was favourable. On the other hand, an enormous quantity of foreign Bonds and Shares to bearer paid no duty whatever when delivered in this country. Such Bonds or Shares to bearer issued, and the dividends payable outside the United Kingdom, required no stamp; whereas the identical securities if issued here, or the dividends made payable here, must bear 10s. per £100 Stamp Duty. He saw no reason why a moderate Stamp Duty should not be universally imposed. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, tried to obtain a revenue from these securities, but in a most vexatious manner. An adhesive stamp of 1s. per £100 had to be affixed to these Bonds and Shares annually whenever transferred or the inconvenience might be avoided by the payment of 10s. per £100 once for all. Very few could avail themselves of this option, and the troublesome tax was removed by the present Leader of the Opposition substituting an increased stamp on contracts. He was convinced that by such a uniform charge of 5s., the revenue would be increased, and our traders would not be handicapped to the advantage of foreigners. This conviction was supported by the opinions of permanent officials at Somerset House, and by Sir Algernon West and Sir Alfred Milner. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consent to appoint a Select Committee to consider the Stamp Duties. That Committee would make clear the effect on trade of the Stamp Duty on Bills of Exchange drawn out of the United Kingdom and payable out of the United Kingdom, but negotiated here. The transactions in foreign Bills had declined enormously of late years. He knew from his own experience that they were not a quarter of what they were 40 years ago. In 1895 the return from Bill Stamps was £626,000, and in 1896 it was £672,000. But in 1885 the return was £683,000, and in 1886 £637,000. These Bills of Exchange were international instruments of credit, and it would be of great value to the mercantile community if all countries were to have similar regulations in regard to them. As to the deposits in the Post Office Savings Banks, he urged that the interest on deposits of over £100 should be reduced from 2½ per cent. to 2 per cent. That would not affect the great mass of working-class depositors, and thrift was promoted more by the security than the rate of interest given. This high rate of interest, by attracting money to the savings banks, was detrimental to commercial interests; it involved loss to the Government and forced up the price of Consols to the disadvantage of the operations of the Sinking Fund. The saving effected by reducing the interest on the larger deposits would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to hold a large reserve of gold when gold might be difficult to obtain. A golden opportunity of creating this reserve was lost last year; but gold was still plentiful and could be gradually amassed by the Government.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said the problem of the Post Office Savings Banks must be solved before very long, for two reasons—first that we were drifting into a very large deficit on the part of the savings banks, and also that we were driving up the price of Consols to a point that would make it difficult to supply them. The idea that in past years the Post Office Savings Bank had been worked at a profit was well founded. When Consols were £92 or £93, as they were some years ago, there was no doubt that a considerable profit was made on the sums invested. The simple solution of the problem was that the present system should be stopped at once—that existing depositors should go on as they were, but that all fresh depositors should be paid a lower rate. He should be sorry if any step were taken that would appear to be discouraging thrift; but the reduction in the rate of interest would mean only a loss of about a farthing a week to the average investor. Another objection to the present system was that if the State invested the Post Office money in Colonial or Corporation Stock it amounted to the State guaranteeing that Stock, the result of which would be that the price of the Stock would go up at once. The savings banks deposits were increasing at the rate of one million a month, and we were paying off the National Debt at the rate of three-quarters of a million a month, and at the rate we were going, Consols would, in a few years, be practically unpurchaseable.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) said some things had been done recently by the Transvaal Government which he could not palliate or approve of—things which ought not to be done by any modern civilised State, and which largely diminished the sympathy that some of them felt with President Kruger. One of those acts was the suppression of newspapers. ["Hear, hear!"] That was a policy which carried them back to the dark days, ten years ago, when the Conservative Party was coercing Ireland. [*Cheers and laughter.*] If the Irish people had the power then he felt sure they should have spent at least £200,000 in preventing by force of arms the suppression of their newspapers, and he could only commend the generous spirit of the English people in preventing a similar invasion of the liberties of English-speaking people in other parts of the world. With regard to the question of the savings banks, he would like to know how they had managed to pay 2½ per cent. on the deposits without actually incurring any loss? They did it by sweating Ireland. [*Ministerial laughter.*] In respect of the Irish Church Fund, they had refused year by year to reduce the rate of interest, and it was by means of the exaggerated amount of interest which for 20 years they had been receiving from an Irish charitable fund that they had made their account balance. English Chancellors of the Exchequer had for many years shown themselves adept in making their accounts balance, and making up a deficit by putting their hand into somebody else's pocket. He was bound to say there was no indication in the Budget statement of this year that there was to be any change in the policy which had been consistently pursued towards Ireland. As to the retrospect in which the right hon. Gentleman had indulged, he did not begrudge the English people the enormous advances in their material and social prosperity which they had made during the present year, but he would ask them not to forget that during this reign Ireland had certainly declined in population, and, according to the Report of the Financial Commission, in wealth also. They in Ireland had no reason to look back with any satisfaction on the retrospect that had been suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There had been no more miserable period in the history of their country. They had had a famine, and, in addition, they had suffered from a slow process by which the life-blood of the people had been drained, which was worse than a famine. A great part of their sufferings during this period they owed to the policy of Her Majesty's advisers, supported by the majority of the English people. So far as England was concerned, he believed it was true that the working classes now contributed very little taxation, but it was not the case in Ireland. At the present moment 75 per cent. of the taxation raised in Ireland was raised by indirect taxation, which was largely contributed by the working classes of the country. They talked about the prosperity of Belfast. But even there there were a large number of families in which the father, apart from the labour of the women and children, could not earn anything like 13s. a week. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider a few figures. It was not too much to suppose that such a family would consume 1lb. of tea per week. On that they would pay to the revenue 17s. 4d. a year, and more was exacted from the consumer than was actually received by the State, because various middlemen must have their profit on the amount of the duty as well as the cost of the original article. On an ounce of tobacco a week the family would pay 8s. 8d. a year. A glass of whisky every second day between five persons, not all adults, would not be a large allowance. [*Laughter.*] He would not call a man a drunkard who had a glass of whisky every second day with the help of his family. [*Renewed laughter.*] The sum payable in a year for a glass of whisky on that basis would be £1 10s. 5d., and the Irish peasant would pay considerably more in duty on articles of indirect taxation than the typical poor English family at the beginning of the reign, visions of whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer had conjured up. If it was the pride of their policy that they had relieved the sufferings of their own poor by lessening the burden of taxation upon them, why was it not their duty to relieve the burdens which still pressed on the poor in the sister isle. He might be told that the articles of indirect taxation which he had mentioned would not have been consumed by the English poor at the beginning of the Queen's reign. Who compelled them to eat bread? A large portion of Irish people preferred potatoes. A large portion of the world's population got on very well without bread, so it could not be said that bread was a necessary of life, and the articles consumed by the English poor at the beginning of the century were not essentials of life. The Irish people were not compelled to use tea and tobacco, but they were necessary in a climate like that of Ireland. Though taxation in Ireland might be levied on a few articles, the Irish people paid more in proportion to their income than the English poor did on the thousand articles which were taxed at the beginning of the Queen's reign. In the case of income tax, still more of the Death Duties, there was a certain amount of graduation. The rich man had to pay more in proportion to his income to a certain extent than the poor man, but in the case of commodities it was the opposite way. It was considered according to the free trade system that specific duties should be levied and not *ad valorem*, and consequently, in the case of tea, they took fourpence whether the tea be worth in bond tenpence a pound or two shillings. He had never been able to understand precisely why that should be a necessary part of the free trade system. He saw in the United States that the Democrats, who were regarded as the more free trade of the two parties, had substituted *ad valorem* for specific duties in the Wilson as compared with the McKinley Bill, because they said *ad valorem* duties were fairer as between rich and poor. He saw that the Liberal Party in Canada, as one of the features of that magnificent Budget they had introduced—and it was the wish of all Members that they might be able to carry it through—were going to substitute *ad valorem* for specific duties. Therefore, he was bound to say, from the Cobden point of view, there was ground for reconsidering that anathema which was pronounced in the middle years of the century against *ad valorem* duties. It might be true that this system of raising their money by specific duties on commodities was a system which pressed less heavily on the vast trade of this great commercial country, but it was also true that that system pressed most heavily upon the poor of this country, and still more upon the poor of Ireland. If they considered it necessary for the maintenance of their commercial supremacy that they should keep up this free trade system, under which they had undoubtedly prospered, and if they considered as part of that free trade system they should tax the commodities of the poor, proportionately to their value, much heavier than the commodities consumed by the rich, then he said they ought to look about them to see whether, without sacrificing their free trade system, they could give to the poor some other redress. Even if Ireland were not a separate entity and the Irish people only so many individuals, taxpayers and citizens of this country, then on that basis it was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, finding there were these individuals on whom this system pressed so heavily, to attempt, in his financial statement of the year, to give them some relief. The right hon. Gentleman had made no such attempt, and there was nothing in the Budget to give relief to the people of Ireland. He did not suppose that there ever would be anything in the Budget of an English Chancellor of the Exchequer which would give relief to the people of Ireland until England was afraid of losing Ireland in the course of a foreign war. He was reading some time ago a letter of the Duke of Wellington, written in 1808, when he was engaged in military operations in the North of Portugal. In that letter the Duke wrote strongly to the English Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day, urging him, for political reasons, not to follow the advice of those who asked him to increase the taxation of Ireland. It was undesirable, in the opinion of the Duke, to increase the taxation of Ireland during the circumstances of those years. England was then in the throes of a death struggle with France, and it would have been dangerous to increase the taxation of Ireland to the pitch to which it had been raised now. But at the present day, England was not afraid that there was anybody on the whole face of the world who was likely to stir a finger to help Ireland. For this reason England continued to sweat and over-tax the Irish people, who were the poorest of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The hon. Member who has just sat down and the hon. Member for Islington must excuse me if I do not on this occasion enter at length into the important question of the financial relations between Ireland and Great Britain. We have had a Debate on that already, and, no doubt, we shall have some further Debates on the subject. I will only venture to say with regard to the charge they have made against me of not considering the circumstances of Ireland in the comparison I made, that I did consider the circumstances of Ireland, and I stated that the advance of prosperity of which I spoke had not come to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects alike. But I entirely deny that it has come to no one in Ireland. There is a corner in Ireland—the north-east corner, Belfast, and its neighbourhood—which, in my belief, has prospered as much as any part of Great Britain. ["Hear, hear!"] If I am asked why the rest of Ireland has not been equally prosperous, I am afraid the only answer can be that we have not all prospered equally, the agricultural districts of the country have prospered least, and Ireland is mainly an agricultural country. My comparison of the taxation on a labourer's family in 1836 and last year applied equally to Ireland as to Great Britain, because the commodities were those on which the rates of taxation were equal in 1836 in Ireland and in Great Britain.

Mr. LOUGH: Not spirits.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I carefully excluded spirits from my comparison just as I did beer, and the articles I took were not concerned with alcohol of any kind. The comparison was perfectly fair with regard to the relief of taxation which has been received under the change in our fiscal system by the Irish labourer just as much as by the Scotch or English labourer. Some hon.Members have raised several questions in the course of the evening on which I would only say a very few words. My hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester and my hon. Friend the Member for East Finsbury asked me if I would consider the abolition of the plate licence duty. I have had a great many representations on that subject, both for and against the abolition of the duty. As far as I can make out, it is one of those rare taxes which those who pay it desire to maintain. [*Laughter.*] That being so, I confess I am rather predisposed against its abolition, particularly as the Exchequer would not lose, but the County Councils, who now receive its proceeds. I happen to know that the County Councils' Association are particularly desirous to retain it, unless I am willing to give them an equivalent grant in place of the tax. On the whole, I do not think there is a good case for the abolition of the plate licence duty. My hon. Friend the Member for East Islington and the hon. Baronet the Member for Whitechapel, have referred to the interest on deposits in Savings Banks. I have already stated in the course of this Session that that subject is under my very careful consideration. I am bound to say that the more I look at it the more I feel what very great difficulties are involved in it, and, as I said when I last addressed the House on the subject, I do not think any one of us would desire to reduce the rate of interest upon deposits in savings banks unless we were absolutely convinced that it was essential to the public interest to do so. ["Hear, hear!"] The matter is before me, and when I have any announcement to make in regard to it, it will, of course, take the shape of the introduction of a Bill. I am afraid I have introduced an element of controversy into the Debate this evening by the statement I made that I had to reserve £200,000 in my Budget for increasing the Imperial garrison in South Africa. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, whom I have to thank for the kind way in which he referred to me, rather complained that I had mentioned the matter at all. I do not know what else I could have done. Last year, I remember, I was attacked by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton for not having made any provision in my Budget for military expenses in the Soudan. At that time I had no reason to expect we should be called upon to pay anything; but this evening I knew that we were about to incur an expenditure of £200,000, which was not provided for in the Estimates, in South

Africa, and which I should have to provide for in the course of the year. I should not have been frank with the Committee if I had kept that fact back from them and if I had not stated it in the course of my Budget speech. I merely refer to the matter now, not in order to discuss it at all, because I understand that a very early opportunity will be given for a full discussion of the subject, but because I really wish to defend myself for having brought the matter before the House in the Budget speech. I trust the Committee will be willing to take one of the Resolutions to-night. I understand there is a desire on the part of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the Tea Duty Resolution, which is usually put first, should be withdrawn to-night and the Income Tax substituted for it. I hope the Committee will be willing to take the Income Tax Resolution, and then we can report Progress. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir W. HARCOURT: I think the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman is quite reasonable, and I am much obliged to him for having made the alteration and reserving the Resolution in reference to the Tea Duty, because I, for one, desire on that to raise a discussion on the subject of indirect taxation. I should be glad to know from the right hon. Gentleman, or from the Leader of the House, what form the discussion he has indicated in reference to South Africa will take. Will it be on a Resolution or an Estimate, or in what particular way will that discussion be taken?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I presume the proper way of taking the discussion will be upon a supplementary Estimate, which will be moved by the Under Secretary for War. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that it cannot be put down to-morrow, and it cannot be put down for to-morrow fortnight, because that day is mortgaged to the Irish Members. Therefore we are shut in between to-morrow week and Friday, May 21. Of course, I will take whichever of these Fridays the right hon. Gentleman desires. If he takes Friday week then the discussion on foreign affairs cannot be taken on that day.

Chancellor of the Exchequer.

TEA.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Duty of Customs now payable on Tea shall continue to be charged, levied, and paid on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):—Tea . . . the pound . Four Pence."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

INCOME TAX.

Resolved, that Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, at the rate of eightpence.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Read the Third time, and passed.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

NAVY AND MARINES (WILLS) ACT (1865) AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said he had been in communication with the Admiralty with regard to an Amendment of which he had given notice, and, having had a statement from the Secretary to the Admiralty, he did not propose to move.

Bill reported without Amendment; Read the Third time, and passed.

VOLUNTEERS BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

APPEAL IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

Mr. KNOX asked for an explanation of its objects.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) said that on the introduction of the Bill he made a full statement of its purpose and effect. It simply gave an appeal from the decision of the Queen's Bench to the Court of Appeal in Ireland in cases stated in four particular classes, namely, on questions of Rating under the Salmon Fisheries Acts, under the Railways Acts, and under the Civil Courts Procedure Acts.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BICYCLES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

FOREIGN PRISON-MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned till Monday next.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES' JURISDICTION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BURIAL GROUNDS LOANS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 17th May.

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 20th May.

CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) (COMPULSORY PURCHASE POWERS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 13th May.

ACCOUNTANTS' BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 12th May.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 28th May.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 24th May.

HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

CHAFF-CUTTING MACHINES ACCIDENTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 25th May.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (SCOTLAND) LOANS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

SERVICE FRANCHISE BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned till Tuesday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 13th May.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Monday next.

POLICE PENSIONS AND SERVICE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MERSEY CHANNELS BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

VERMINOUS PERSONS BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

House Adjourned at Five Minutes after Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 30th April 1897.

QUESTIONS.

VACCINATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether there is any reason for the delay in publishing the Appendices to the final Report of the Royal Commission on Vaccination, the Report having been issued in August last; and, if a probable date can be given for the publication of the Appendices, and of the concluding volume or volumes of Minutes of Evidence?

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): I am informed that the volumes referred to are now in the printer's hands, and will be issued as soon as the lithographs accompanying them are ready.

SOLOMON ISLANDS.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies which are the chief Solomon Islands which are the subject of the new protectorate; and in which of them the Government station is to be established?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): The protectorate to which the hon. Member refers was proclaimed in 1893, and extends to all the islands of the Solomon Group south of the line of demarcation fixed by the agreement with Germany in 1886. The principal islands are New Georgia, Guadalcanar, Malaita and San Christoval. The Government station is to be on the small island of Tulage, on the north side of Guadalcanar, the largest island of the group, and close to it. A Report by Mr. Woodford, the Resident, has been laid, and will shortly be in the hands of the Members.

SALT (HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS).

Sir CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is the case that salt is not included among the condiments issued by the Admiralty for use on board ship; and whether, considering the importance of salt as a dietetic ingredient, and the fact that the use of salt meat as the principal form of food on board ship has long been superseded, he will consider the propriety of issuing salt as well as mustard and pepper for use on board Her Majesty's ships?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. Macartney, Antrim, S.): Salt has hitherto been issued as a ration only in the case of boys in training ships and troops on passage, where the "savings" system does not exist. My attention was only drawn to this after the Estimates for the current year were framed, but arrangements are now being made which will meet the views expressed in the hon. Member's Question.

SCIENCE AND ART GRANTS (SCOTLAND).

Sir CHARLES CAMERON: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it has been decided to transfer the administration of the grants to schools in Scotland for Science and Art to the Scotch Education Department; and, if so, when this change will be made and the details published?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): As has already been announced, it has been decided to transfer to the Scotch Education Department the administration of the Science and Art Grants to schools in Scotland. The actual transfer cannot be completed until the details which are now under consideration have been arranged.

WATERLOO AND CITY RAILWAY.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the whole or greater part of the rolling stock required by the new Waterloo and City Railway has been ordered from America; and whether he will consider the framing of a new Standing Order directing that companies applying to Parliament to construct new railways shall be bound to purchase a fair proportion of the goods required in the United Kingdom?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C.T. RITCHIE, Croydon): No, Sir, I am not prepared to suggest such a new Standing Order. With regard to the particular case referred to, I am informed by the Company that the order has been placed with an American firm for the reason that, although no less than seven selected English firms were invited to tender, not one of them was able to complete and deliver the rolling stock in question, consisting of only 22 coaches (the wheels and axles for which are to be supplied by English and Scotch firms) within the time required by the Company for the opening of the railway.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: As I understand that the contract is not actually signed, will the right hon. Gentleman use his influence with the Company, so that they may be brought to a proper sense of their duty to English trade?

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir. I do not see that any duty is imposed upon railway companies to employ people who cannot deliver goods within a specified time. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): Are we to understand that English labour is so fully employed that the work cannot be executed?

MR. RITCHIE: I am quite unable to state the reason why the goods cannot be delivered within the specified time, but obviously that must be the case.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Has the refusal to execute the order anything to do with the apprehension that strikes may occur?

[No answer was given.]

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he will grant a Return of the cases in which, since 1870 or within the last ten or 15 years, the enlargement of a Voluntary School has not been reckoned as part of the school accommodation of a district?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I cannot give the Return asked for, which would involve a search through the correspondence of every Voluntary School. But the hon. Member may take it that the cases are very few.

POST OFFICE SERVICE.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, in view of the fact that by the Post Office Circular 1190, page 79, it is fixed that no interval between duties of less than half an hour will be booked off, but the two duties will be regarded as continuous, will he kindly ascertain whether the half hour's interval between duties is actually allowed in the Rochdale Post Office, to which the employés at that office claim to have a right if they understand the Regulation referred to correctly?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General will have inquiry made into this matter, as desired by the hon. Member.

"MARS" (BATTLESHIP).

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state whether the new battleship *Mars* has been taken over from the contractors; and whether, during her construction, there was any departure from the original specification; and, if so, will he state the amount represented by the changes?

MR. MACARTNEY: The *Mars* has been taken over from the contractors, and is now approaching completion, but the final payments under the contract have not yet been made, her trials being incomplete. During her construction certain additions were made to the original specification. The aggregate amount of these additions to the contract is about £11,000, on a grand total for the original contract work of £832,000.

STATIONERY (ADMIRALTY).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the heavy cost of stationery in the Admiralty Offices, he will consider the expediency of giving instructions for the printed acknowledgments of correspondence to be issued on ordinary note size paper instead of on the expensive foolscap paper at present used by the Admiralty; whether he is aware that the use of foolscap paper for such purpose has long since been superseded in other Departments by the use of paper of note size, with the result that a considerable economy in the cost of stationery has been effected; and whether, with a view to lessen the cost of the clerical staff employed at the Admiralty, he will consider the desirability of issuing type-written letters instead of letters written by hand on double-foolscap?

Mr. MACARTNEY: A Departmental Committee has been appointed to consider the whole question of the stationery used in the Admiralty Offices, and until its Report has been received I am not prepared to make any statement. The economy which would result from the adoption of the particular proposal suggested by the hon. Member would not be as considerable as he appears to imagine. It has been the practice for many years to issue type-written letters on half-sheets of foolscap, and there are at present 31 type machines in constant use in the Admiralty Departments in London.

FISHERY CRUISER "VIGILANT."

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state why the sum of £250 voted for fitting up the fishery cruiser *Vigilant* with a search light has not been appropriated for that purpose?

***The LORD ADVOCATE**: The money voted for a search light was not appropriated to that purpose because damages sustained during a gale by the deckhouse of the *Vigilant*, on which it had been purposed to mount it, revealed the fact that the deckhouse was not sufficiently strong for the purpose, and it was considered that the expense involved in strengthening it would not be justified.

BROOKEBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland (1) if the Lord Chancellor has been made aware that Mr. James Beatty, J.P., on the 2nd of March last, at Brookeborough Petty Sessions, adjudicated in a case wherein his first cousin was the prosecutor and fined the defendant, a labourer, in the sum of £3; and (2) what action will the Lord Chancellor take in this case?

***The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND** (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): A man named Kirkpatrick was summoned to the Petty Sessions at Brookeborough on the date mentioned for trespass in pursuit of game, at the suit of a relative of the Justice referred to. The complainant, however, did not appear, and the case was not heard. The Question mentioned in the second paragraph does not, therefore, arise for consideration.

PLAGUE (INDIAN TRANSPORT "DILWARA").

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Indian transport *Dilwara*, which arrived at Southampton on 6th April, had had a fatal case of plague on board during her voyage; whether the local authorities found their sanitary powers sufficient to protect the local health interests; and whether this is the second occasion within the last few months on which the infection of plague on board ship has been successfully dealt with in this country without any resort to quarantine detention of vessels and persons?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: A fatal case of plague occurred on board the Indian transport *Dilwara* after the vessel had left Bombay. The body was buried at sea; and, under the recent Venice Convention, only the two actual attendants on the sick person were detained at Suez (Moses' Wells), the vessel at once passing through the canal in quarantine. On reaching Southampton on April 6 the *Dilwara* was met by a medical inspector of the Board, who acted in concert with the military and local port authorities. No further case had occurred, and under the excellent arrangements organised by the port medical officer, all the 1,235 persons on board were allowed to land, and the existing powers were found to be fully sufficient to protect all health interests concerned. The hon. Member is quite correct in his assumption. This is the second occasion within the last few months on which the infection of plague on board ship has been successfully dealt with without resort to any quarantine detention of either vessels or persons. ["Hear, hear!"]

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state the number of clerks employed in the Telegraph Department of the Post Office in offices where the staffs are not amalgamated; and whether he can say how many head postmasters have benefited under the improved scheme resulting from the recommendations of Lord Tweedmouth's Committee?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not at present able to give the information desired, but he will write to the hon. Member on the subject.

TRAIN SERVICE (EUSTON AND HOLYHEAD).

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the London and North Western Railway Company have arranged to run their express trains between Euston and Holyhead at a greatly increased rate of speed, so as to save more than an hour's time on the journey each way; and, if so, why is it that a similar saving of time cannot be effected in the case of the mail trains, so as to allow of a later departure from Dublin and Euston, especially in the mornings?

MR. HANBURY: There is reason to believe that the London and North Western Railway Company intend to accelerate the speed of their express trains between London and Holyhead on the 1st May, and some of these will then perform the journey in rather less time than the corresponding mail trains. The stops of the mail trains, however, are necessarily more numerous and somewhat longer than those of the accelerated trains in connection with the North Wall boats, and to this is mainly due the longer time that will be occupied on the journey. The hon. Member is, no doubt, aware that the day mail trains between London and Holyhead have not been accelerated, as no such postal advantages would have been gained therefrom as to justify the additional expense.

Mr. T. W. Russell.

POSTMASTERSHIP (MONAGHAN).

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, with reference to the 83 applications stated to have been received in respect of the recent vacancy in the postmastership of Monaghan, how many of these were from Ireland; of the entire number of the applicants how many, if any, held the position of provincial clerks in charge; what was the respective class rank of each at the time of making application, their respective length of service, and for what portion of such service did they hold the position of provincial clerk in charge; for what period of his 12 years of service did the present postmaster of Monaghan fill this position, and what was his rank according to seniority on the staff of the second class of the Dublin office to which he was attached before receiving his recent promotion; and was Rule 38 of Instructions to Head Postmasters adhered to in the appointment of the Monaghan postmaster?

MR. HANBURY: Of the 83 applicants for the postmastership of Monaghan, 43 were from Ireland and 40 from other parts of the United Kingdom. Of the 83 applicants 10 were provincial clerks in charge; of these 1 was a telegraphist of the first class, with a service of 22 years, having acted as provincial clerk in charge for 9 years. Seven were sorting clerks and telegraphists with service as follows:—22 years, 5 years as provincial clerk in charge; 21 years, 11 years as provincial clerk in charge; 19 years, 10 years as provincial clerk in charge; 12 years, 10 years as provincial clerk in charge; 12 years, 1 year as provincial clerk in charge; 11 years, 9 years as provincial clerk in charge; 8 years, 5 years as provincial clerk in charge. One was a telegraphist of the second class with a service of 20 years, having acted as provincial clerk in charge for 2 years; and one was a sorting clerk of the second class (Mr. Williams, who was appointed postmaster of Monaghan), with a service of 11 years, for 4½ of which he had acted as provincial clerk in charge. The position of the postmaster of Monaghan on the second class of sorting clerks in Dublin was No. 104, on a class numbering 252. So far as the Postmaster of Monaghan is concerned, the Postmasters' Rule No. 38 appears to have been strictly adhered to. He was selected for the postmastership because he was regarded as the best qualified candidate.

RAILWAY CARRIAGES (OVERCROWDING).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the inconvenience and danger to the travelling public resulting from the overcrowding of railway carriages, he will appoint a Committee to inquire into the means which should be adopted to prevent such overcrowding?

Mr. RITCHIE: No, Sir.

Mr. WEIR said that he should call attention to the subject on the Estimates.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (MORAY FIRTH).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether any steps have been taken to watch the operations of the German trawler *Vigilant*, which was allowed to discharge a cargo of fish at Aberdeen on the night of the 28th instant, on the assurance of her captain that the fish were caught off the Danish coast, so that in the event of her fishing in the prohibited waters of the Moray Firth she will not be allowed to land her catch in Scotland; and whether, in view of the threatened descent of the *Saturn*, *Altona*, and other foreign trawlers on the Moray Firth, he will arrange for one or more additional cruisers to watch the interests of the line fishermen on the Scottish coasts?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: Instructions have been given to watch the *Vigilant*. If it should appear that any foreign trawlers intend to land fish caught in prohibited waters, the necessary action will be taken.

RELIEF MONEY AND TAXATION IN ASIA MINOR.

Mr. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that in Asia Minor relief supplied to Armenians in money and goods has been seized by the agents of the Turkish Government for alleged arrears of taxation; and whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to prevent the continuance of this conduct by the Turkish Government or their agents?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): Several instances have been reported by Her Majesty's Consular Officers in Asia Minor during the last eighteen months of the seizure of relief money by the Turkish tax collectors. Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople have invariably brought these cases to the notice of the Porte, and have received assurances that the proceedings would be checked. In some cases reports have been received that the representations made have been successful, and that the practice has been put a stop to.

ACCIDENT TO PLATELAYERS (GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY).

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received information as to the fatal accident to platelayers during fog on the Great Northern Railway, near Peterborough, on Wednesday; whether he can state what precautions were taken to protect the gang of platelayers, and especially whether a man was placed to watch for approaching trains; whether fog signals or any appliance for warning the men was employed; and whether one of the Inspectors of the Board of Trade will hold an inquiry into the accident?

Mr. RITCHIE: An inquiry into the causes of this accident was at once ordered. The Inspecting Officer will, of course, report upon all matters connected with the accident.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he intends to propose that the House of Commons shall attend Divine Service in St. Margaret's Church, as the Church of the House, on the 20th of June, the Sunday appointed for national thanksgiving for the Queen's long reign, as in 1887; and, in such case, if he will move Mr. Speaker to invite the Premiers of the self-governing Colonies, who will be in London on that day as the guests of the nation, to accompany the Imperial House of Commons on the occasion, and also any members of Colonial Legislatures then in England who may desire to do so, and make application through their respective Agents General?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. Friend I have to say that it is impossible at the present time to determine whether the House will be in Session on June 20, or whether we shall be absent on our holidays. ["Hear, hear!"] But until I know with more certainty I ought not to hold out any undue prospects in view of that contingency. It depends upon how we get on with our business, and until I can forecast the probable duration of the holidays I am afraid that I cannot answer my hon. Friend's Question. ["Hear, hear!"]

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND).

MR. A. D. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can say when the Bill, mentioned in the Queen's Speech as having been prepared, for amending the existing procedure with respect to Private Bills from Scotland, will be introduced?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Bill referred to will be shortly introduced either in this House or in the House of Lords.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

*SIR C. DILKE asked the Vice President of the Council whether the Circular of the Stanton School Board did not reveal facts opposed to the views and intentions of the Government as to balances in necessitous schools; and, if so, by what means he intended to make the matter clear—whether by amendment of the Bill or by amendment of the practice of the Department?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University) said he had seen the Circular, and the facts were substantially correct. The Committee of Council would give the most careful consideration to any Amendments which might be moved to the Necessitous School Boards Bill in Committee.

Sir Howard Vincent.

SUPPLY (IRISH BOARD OF WORKS VOTE).

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury when he proposes to put down the Vote for the Irish Board of Works, and whether he will undertake that the ratepayers of Waterford shall have an opportunity of considering his scheme with regard to the Waterford, Lismore, and Dungarvan Line before the Vote is taken?

MR. HANBURY: No, I do not think I can give any promise, as I understand the 14th has been promised for Irish Votes; but I should be very willing to consult with Irish Members as to whether the Board of Works Vote should be taken on that day or not.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): With regard to the Estimates of the Board of Works, the right hon. Gentleman stated that although Irish Estimates generally came on on the 14th, he will consider the desirability of postponing the Board of Works Estimate to suit the convenience of Irish Members.

MR. HANBURY: Oh, yes. There will be more than one day for Irish Estimates, and, of course, if Irish Members generally wish this Vote to be postponed I shall be glad to do so.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The point is this—whether, as the right hon. Gentleman has stated that it is not likely that any suggestion with regard to the Waterford, Lismore, and Dungarvan Railway will be known before the 14th, he can postpone the Board of Works Estimate until these suggestions are known to the ratepayers?

MR. HANBURY repeated that he should be willing to do so, if that course were generally desired by Irish Members.

WAYS AND MEANS (BUDGET RESOLUTIONS).

In answer to Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said the second day of the discussion on the Budget Resolutions would be Thursday next.

MR. A. O'CONNOR gave notice that in Committee of Ways and Means he should move to reduce the duty on tea from 4d. to 2d. in the pound.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

[SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY.]

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897-8.

CLASS III.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

> "That a sum, not exceeding £43,177, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries of the Law Officers' Department; the salaries and expenses of the Department of the Solicitor for the Affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury, Queen's Proctor, and Director of Public Prosecutions; the costs of prosecutions, of other legal proceedings, and of Parliamentary agency."

*MR. PICKERSGILL moved "That Item H (Salaries) be reduced by £100 in respect of the salary of the Director of Public Prosecutions." The hon. Member said there was a great deal of public dissatisfaction with regard to the manner in which the functions of that office were discharged. No doubt the duties were of a difficult and delicate nature, and in any case complaints would be likely to arise, but at present and for some years past dissatisfaction had existed to an extent which ought not to be. Public functionaries were usually animated by a desire to magnify their office, but it was a tradition of this particular office, extending back over a long period of time, to do as little as possible—a position which was consistent neither with the intentions of Parliament under the Act nor with the Regulations made thereunder. Sometimes a rather paltry parsimony was exercised. For instance, in one or two cases mischief had resulted from the Director of Public Prosecutions or his subordinate omitting to take counsel's advice upon evidence before the case came to trial. Then, in regard to the manner in which cases were conducted by the regular counsel appearing for the Treasury, he entirely corroborated the statement that upon some occasions of recent years Treasury counsel had displayed an over-eagerness to secure convictions—a feature which was very unbefitting the dignity of Crown prosecutions and entirely contrary to the better traditions of the Bar. Country cases were often prepared in a perfunctory and unsatisfactory manner, and he attributed that to the terms of remuneration, only half-fees being paid. There was no more reason why the Government should sweat solicitors than workmen. And, in regard to the conduct of cases in Court, he thought some mischief resulted from what might be called dual control. The Public Prosecutor, although responsible, did not himself select the counsel who conducted the cases. It was in the hands of the Attorney General, but if the arrangement was to work satisfactorily it ought to be accompanied by responsibility. In this case, however, the responsibility was with the Public Prosecutor, while the patronage was with the Law Officer of the Crown. Public inconvenience and perhaps a miscarriage of justice arose from this divided control and responsibility. In citing instances of cases which were not taken up by the Public Prosecutor, he mentioned that at the March Sessions of the Central Criminal Court Mr. Commissioner Kerr made some strong observations in a case in which a police constable had been very seriously attacked and injured. The Commissioner thought it was a case in which the Public Prosecutor ought to have intervened. At the next Sessions the Public Prosecutor made his explanation, to the effect that neither by the magistrates nor by the police had his attention been drawn to the case, and he knew nothing about it until he read the remarks in the newspapers. Only the other day a superintendent of police charged a man before a Metropolitan magistrate with wilful murder, though he had not brought the case before the notice of the Public Prosecutor; the officer told the magistrate that he thought it was better he should get the opinion of the magistrate before he informed the Public Prosecutor of the case. That was totally inconsistent with the regulations, which provided that the superintendent or chief officer should at once bring any capital case to the notice of the Public Prosecutor. So many of these cases occurred as to lead one to think that the superintendents of police in the metropolis had received, directly or indirectly, an intimation that the less they troubled the Public Prosecutor the more satisfactory it would be to that official. What was the date of the last occasion on which the Metropolitan Police were reminded of their duties under the statutory regulations? They had been remiss, and he thought that the Public Prosecutor had shown some laxity in not reminding them of their duty. There was another class of cases where a prosecution having been instituted had been withdrawn by the prosecutor himself. At the Mansion House recently a director of a public company was charged with misappropriating £8,000, the property of the company. The prosecutor desired to withdraw; the magistrate sent the papers to the Director of Public Prosecutions, and a short time afterwards the clerk received an intimation that the Public Prosecutor did not propose to take the case up. But the magistrate expressed the opinion that when an information disclosing a criminal offence was laid before a magistrate, such a termination was most unsatisfactory. Again, the use which was made of our criminal courts as a kind of collecting agency, and sometimes for blackmailing purposes, had become a public scandal. The Public Prosecutor was the person who ought to call the attention of the Law Officers of the Crown to this class of cases, and something ought to be done. The case either ought to be proceeded with, if it was a genuine criminal case, or if the process of law was being abused for the purpose of collecting debt or for blackmailing, steps ought to be taken to put a stop to a gross scandal. Then as to cases of perjury. The attention of the Public Prosecutor was constantly being called to such cases, without effect. There had been laxity and remissness on the part of the Public Prosecutor. Only a few weeks ago one of the grossest cases occurred in the Lambeth County Court; it was a bogus case under the Employers' Liability Act, and there was the clearest evidence of perjury on the part of the complainant. Though the case was brought under the notice of the Public Prosecutor, nothing, so far as he knew, had been done. Then there were the cases against bookmakers consequent on the recent decision in "Hawke *v.* Dunn." The statutory instructions gave very complete power to the Public Prosecutor in regard to any indictable offence to obtain full information from the police as to the commission of the offence, and as to what was being done. They provided the Public Prosecutor with complete means of securing a uniform administration of the law in these cases. But harm was done if the law was enforced in one part of the country and not in another. It was essential that there should be a uniform administration of the law against betting throughout the kingdom.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) admitted that this was a question of great importance. He thought that all those who had to do with the trial of cases agreed that, considering the number which the Public Prosecutor had to conduct, the work was, on the whole, extremely well done. He would undertake to communicate with the Public Prosecutor on the point of counsel being instructed and consulted at the earliest possible stage of a case. Due regard had, he hoped, always been paid to economy, but he did not believe that economical considerations were ever allowed to impede the proper administration of justice. There were four standing Treasury Counsel at the Old Bailey, who acted in accordance with the traditions that had governed prosecutions at the Central Criminal Court for many years. The four gentlemen who now filled the position had done their work admirably. Only two instances of too great eagerness on the part of counsel to obtain a conviction had been brought to his attention in the last four or five years, and those cases had not occurred in London. He had spoken to the gentlemen engaged, and had pointed out to them the rule which should be followed by counsel prosecuting on behalf of the public. The distribution of Treasury briefs in the country was regulated by considerations of fairness and justice, special regard being paid to the legal qualifications of the gentlemen employed. In certain parts of the country, Manchester and Liverpool for example, there were local Public Prosecutors who distributed the greater part of the briefs. That system had not, perhaps, worked in an altogether satisfactory way. If Treasury briefs were distributed in some new way efforts to obtain business which would be unworthy of the legal profession might be encouraged. Irksome, therefore, as the work of distributing these briefs was, it was thought best that in country cases the responsibility of the nomination of counsel should rest where it was. The question of what cases the Public Prosecutor should take up was a very difficult one. That official now took up more cases than he used to do, and acted under the direction of the Attorney General. In bad cases of crime affecting poor people the Public Prosecutor ought not to hesitate about taking action, but it was a different matter when pressure was brought to bear upon him to conduct cases affecting wealthy people who ought themselves to act as prosecutors. These private individuals sometimes initiated prosecutions and conducted them unsuccessfully up to a certain point, and then endeavoured to throw the responsibility of continuing them upon the Public Prosecutor. Although every now and then a case which could be taken up with advantage might escape the attention of the Public Prosecutor, no serious fault could be found with the general way in which he conducted his business. He agreed with the hon. and learned Member that a great many criminal prosecutions had been begun for the purpose of levying blackmail or to obtain the payment of a civil debt, but he would point out that the magistrates before whom such cases came could do more to frustrate the object of those who brought them than the Public Prosecutor could. He did not believe that that official was at all likely to sanction any compromise which would result in the escape of an offender. Careful attention was being bestowed on this class of cases, and still further watchfulness would be exercised if it was thought necessary. He feared he could not give the hon. and learned Member much satisfaction in regard to the subject of betting prosecutions. The action of the police in betting cases was necessarily controlled to a certain extent by the Home Office, and there were practical difficulties in the way of getting cases for trial. He would inquire whether any new instructions had been issued by the Public Prosecutor in consequence of the recent decision to which reference had been made.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): regretted that the Report on the subject of public prosecutions had not been laid upon the Table of the House before this Vote was considered. It seemed to him that there was great laxity in connection with cases of perjury, which were growing in number and gravity. Day by day in civil and criminal cases, and especially in divorce cases, the crime of perjury was committed with almost impudent impunity. There seemed to be no disgrace attaching to the crime, and no punishment for it. This, he thought, was a national danger which the Government of the day ought to consider seriously. If prosecutions were instituted in one or two well-selected cases, and if people were thereby made to understand that perjury was punishable by long terms of imprisonment, they might perhaps get rid of what was very little short of a public scandal.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Vote agreed to.

2. £22,300, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses.

*SIR H. FOWLER called attention to the cost of the Railway and Canal Commission. He said this was a case in which there ought to be a Return showing the number of sittings held during the year by this highly-paid body. The last Return on the subject showed that the Commission sat only 30 or 40 days in the year. He wished to know whether the Attorney General could give the Committee any information as to the number of times the Commission had sat during the past year?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston) said the information asked for by the right hon. Gentleman was given at page 211 of the Estimates. With regard to the annual Report, he thought it was just about due, as the last annual Report was signed by the Commissioners in February.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked for some explanation of the item for repayment of Sheriffs' expenses.

Mr. HANBURY said it referred to the repayment of certain expenses connected with the attendances of Judges at Assizes.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he wished to know what class of expenses were repaid, and if some expenses incidental to the office were repaid, whether there was any good reason why all the expenses should not be paid?

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that, having served the office of Sheriff, he knew something about the expense. One of the expenses repaid by the Government was the cost of the Judges' lodgings, but the Sheriff still had to provide carriages for the Judges, and to pay his own expenses in the way of entertaining during the Assizes.

Mr. HANBURY said that the ceremonial expenses that were sometimes incurred depended very much on the Sheriff himself. If he went in for pomp and ceremony, he, of course, incurred considerable expense, but ceremonial had to a great extent diminished. As to the charges that were repaid, the principal ones were the expenses in connection with providing lodgings for the Judges. They took up nearly one-half of the item. Other expenses, such as advertising the Assizes and providing refreshment for jurors, were repaid.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES thought this was a very large sum to pay for Judges' lodgings. He understood that each Judge was allowed seven guineas a day expenses on Circuit, and he would have thought that out of that he could very well lodge himself. Of course, it was not possible that the persons of great eminence who now occupied the Bench should do anything of the sort, but the day might come when Judges might like to extend their time in an Assize town longer than was necessary for the performance of their judicial duties. [*Laughter.*] Consequently he thought that some alteration would have to be made. His objection was that with the seven guineas a day for expenses there ought to be no charge for lodgings made at all, either on the Sheriff or on the country. The right hon. Gentleman was a reformer in these matters, and he hoped he would look into this matter.

Mr. HANBURY said that the actual sum the Judges received for expenses was £7 10s. a day, but he could not say whether the consequences suggested by his hon. Friend were likely to follow. As the payment of the Judges' expenses arose on another Vote, he could not discuss it on this one.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said that Sheriffs always had to spend a certain amount of money. They had to supply carriages, and some Judges even insisted on having men standing behind. Trumpeters were also insisted on in some counties; but cut down to the lowest figure the Sheriffs' expenses came to £200. In some large counties they came to £1,000 or £1,500.

*Sir H. FOWLER said the £7 10s. referred to was a composition in lieu of an annual sum of, he thought, £500, which used to be paid for Circuit expenses. In what he had said just now about the Railway Commission, he had not wished to cast any doubt on the manner in which they performed their duties, but simply to point out that on that Commission there were two highly-paid and insufficiently-employed judicial officials, receiving £3,000 a year each, who might be utilised for other judicial work. ["Hear, hear!"]

Vote agreed to.

3. £204,451, to complete the sum for Supreme Court of Judicature.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) hoped some light would be thrown on the various items of this Vote, where there was certainly room for retrenchment. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. R. B. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said there was no doubt that the time had come when the items in this Vote should receive careful consideration. He was sure that if the condition of things which existed here existed in any other Department of the State it would have been subjected to a large amount of scrutiny. There was, for instance, the question of the registrars, which should be carefully inquired into, particularly as to whether the staff might not be reduced with economy and efficiency. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought the Government might appoint a Departmental Committee or a small Commission which would bring before the House materials which would enable them to form a judgment.

*Mr. CHARLES HARRISON (Plymouth) pointed out that there was an additional reason why this Vote should be carefully scrutinised with a view to effect greater economy. The judicature fees contributed, in fact, by the litigants and the parties brought in aid and in reduction of the Vote amounted to no less than £383,000; whilst the expenses of all the officers, general staff and clerks of assize in all the Courts only amounted to £378,000. This charge included all the judicial and other staff of the superior courts, and expenses attending the conduct of business in all the superior courts—bankruptcy, lunacy, probate, Admiralty and winding up—and provided for every service but for (1) the maintenance of the buildings, (2) the local rates charged thereon, (3) the stationery, amounting in all to £51,000, and (4) the salaries of the Judges and their pensions, amounting to £192,000. So that practically the public taxpayers found only the buildings, paid the local rates, and paid for the Judges. But against this there was the large profit made from the Court acting as bankers to the funds of those whose affairs were administered by this staff. In this state of the account he thought the taxation on the suitors levied as judicature fee stamps should be reduced, and that on this Vote there should appear as part of the appropriation in aid the large profit made upon the funds banked by the Court. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said the hon. and learned Member had pointed out that there were too many registrars, and he wondered what could be done to make them fewer. Well, he would suggest whether they might not all be made Judges. [*Laughter.*] He trusted that in a short time they would see that suggestion carried out. He came to a somewhat cognate point—the officers of the Judges. All the managing clerks, etc., were already provided for, but then in addition to these there was a great personal retinue, which was seen to great advantage when the Judges came to the Sheriffs with their javelin men, trumpeters, and the rest. Here there was an item of £17,338 set down for the personal following of the Judges, these Judges being already provided with officers. These personal officials were the remnant of ancient ceremonial which ought to be got rid of. If the Lord Chancellor wanted personal officers, why should he not pay for them out of his £10,000 a year? ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend the Secretary of the Treasury, who used to sit with him on the other side of the House and who was the only reformer in the Government—[*laughter*]—should give his attention to the matter. The hon. Member also complained of the overstaffing of the Probate Department. He referred to an item on page 217 with reference to the Probate Division. He made out that there were over 100 persons, clerks, in the Probate Division, and they cost from £30,000 to £40,000 a year. Now that division was mainly occupied in taking care of and making copies of wills. It was a mere survival of the old ecclesiastical jurisdiction which used to have the power of dealing with wills, but the establishment was now nothing but a mere storehouse and the copying place of wills. It ought really to belong to the Inland Revenue Department, which was concerned with the Death Duties. This Probate Department was no longer required. The staff were not lawyers at all; they were clerks purely, and they ought not to be in this Vote at all. They were, he knew, under a most eminent Judge, but their proper place was in the Death Duty Department. He hoped, therefore, that the Secretary for the Treasury would give them a promise that he would look into the matter. He would suggest that his hon. Friend should visit the Department one day in disguise—[*laughter*]—or send some confidential person to see for him.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said that during the last ten or 15 years there had been a continuous reduction of the staff of the High Court, and he personally had come to the conclusion that we had got very near to the point at which we could not stand any further reduction. He had never heard that there were too many Registrars, or that there was sufficient promptitude in getting through the work. As to Masters, and those who were formerly Associates, he was persuaded we had got very near to the lowest point. In the year 1886-87, just ten years ago, the expenditure on salaries of Masters, Registrars, and various other clerks and officers was £299,932, while at the present time it was £268,729. There had been by a reduction in the staff a saving of upwards of £30,000. The total expenditure in 1886-87 was £417,868, and in 1895-96 it was £383,245. There were 21 Masters at the time of the passing of the Judicature Act, but there were now only 18, and in several other offices the number of officials had been reduced. For years past there had been practically continuous investigation under the direction of the Lord Chancellor, with the result he had stated. His hon. Friend the Member for Lynn Regis, who ought to be learned—he believed the hon. Gentleman was entitled to be called learned—[*laughter*]—was for once mistaken. The hon. Member spoke of the personal retinue of the Judges. For centuries it was the practice for a Judge of the High Court to have two clerks—a senior with £400 a year, and a junior with £200. Now, however, each Judge, except the Lord Chief Justice and the Master of the Rolls, had only one clerk. That was a body clerk who attended the Judge in Court and on Circuit, and he was quite satisfied there was nobody who really understood the administration of justice who would suggest it was improper that a clerk at £200 or £300 should be provided for each of Her Majesty's Judges. The hon. Member for King's Lynn spoke of mediæval officials in the office of the Lord Chancellor, but for some years now these officials had been done away with. The salaries, which amounted to £3,824, were not for the personal attendants of the Lord Chancellor, but for clerks in the office. As to the Probate Registry, in 1893 a Committee, which sat under the direction of the Lord Chancellor, recommended extensive reforms. Those reforms were now being carried out, and there had been in that department, as in others, a considerable reduction of the staff. It would not be denied that extremely important work was done in the department. He admitted the experience of the hon. Member for Lynn Regis in matters connected with the Death Duties, but he did not think the hon. Gentleman's criticism in respect of the *personnel* of the Probate Registry was well founded. The hon. Member said the number of clerks might be reduced from 100 to 80. When he asserted that the office was now reorganised, and was being improved under the recommendations of a Committee which sat as recently as 1893, they might take it that the efficiency and good order of the office were not being neglected.

MR. HALDANE said that the Registrars were most capable and efficient public servants, but he asked the Committee to consider what their work was. Including the Court of Appeal dealing with Chancery matters, there were six Chancery Courts. The work the Registrars had to do was to record the formal orders and to take note of the documents read and put in. That, of course, was skilled work, but it was not so difficult as it looked. There were 12 Registrars—two for each Court—with salaries varying from £1,250 to £2,000 a year. These Registrars were assisted by 11 principal clerks, with salaries varying from £400 to £800; and there were besides second and third class clerks. There were altogether for six Courts 12 Registrars, assisted by 27 clerks. Judging from the standard which obtained in ordinary Government Departments, it seemed to him that reform in the Supreme Court of Judicature had not proceeded at that magnificent pace which one would gather from the statement of the Attorney General. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked for explanation of the circuit allowances and expenses. Were these paid by the day? How was it that so very large a sum was required, when it was common knowledge that the time of the Judges on circuit was often not fully occupied?

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said that the circuit arrangements were in a very confused state, and that often the Judges found themselves with nothing to do for two or three days, while the work in London suffered. That was a matter of the rearrangement of circuits; but there was another question involved—namely, the delay which often occurred between the committal and the trial of a prisoner. It frequently happened that a person who had been kept in prison for two, three, or even four months, was found not guilty. It was perfectly shocking that such a state of things could exist. The best solution of the difficulty would be to have a rearrangement of circuits. He knew the difficulties raised by the smaller towns to any such proposal; and he did not wish to see the circuit system unduly interfered with, as far as criminal work was concerned; but something ought to be done to prevent the long imprisonment of innocent persons. He would suggest that the practice of accepting bail should be very largely extended. In ordinary cases the rich men were bailed out and the poor men had to go to prison. It was found that men very seldom forfeited their own recognisances; and, as a matter of fact, poor men could not do so, because they had not the means to fly the country. If the Attorney General could not come to an early settlement of the circuit system, by which the trial of prisoners might be expedited, he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would introduce a Bill to make it compulsory to accept a prisoner's own recognisances except in the gravest cases.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said that the circuit allowances of the Judges were calculated at the rate of £7 10s. a day. That system was in lieu of the allowances previously made; but he himself thought that a lump sum would be better than a daily allowance. He was quite alive to the importance of protecting innocent people from the possibility of being kept in gaol; but as to the granting of bail, there had been grave scandals in recent years caused by the escape of criminals to whom bail had been granted. As to remodelling the circuit system, many unsuccessful efforts in that direction had been made. No doubt a long interval sometimes still elapsed between committal and trial, but he hoped that in regard to minor crimes Parliament would extend the jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions. It was an almost hopeless task to deal with the circuit question. Directly it was proposed to change the circuit arrangements in respect of any town there was an uproar among the inhabitants of that town. He hoped that some day or other an improved state of things might be brought about; but if it were to be done the House of Commons must turn a deaf ear to the grievances which might really be believed to exist, but which two or three years' experience would dissipate.

*SIR H. FOWLER said that ever since he had been a Member he had heard the Law Officers make the same speech as the Attorney General had just made. The difficulty would never be solved on the present lines. We had the Judges attempting the impossible—to reconcile all sorts of conflicting interests, and to do justice to them all. Not only were there the susceptibilities of the towns, but there were the conflicting claims of the Bar and other professional men concerned, and of the witnesses and experts. But the hopeless difficulty would vanish if the matter were placed in the hands not of Judges, barristers, or lawyers, but of a Government department independent of sectional influences, and regarding first and only the convenience of the public. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of the Treasury could settle the matter in three months. Each scheme which the Judges produced seemed to be worse than the previous one. Judicial time was the property of the country, which paid for it on the most liberal scale, and which was entitled to have justice speedily and cheaply administered. Above all, innocent people—and even guilty people—had a right to speedy trial. In any other department of the State such arrangements would not be tolerated for a moment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was having a very distinguished career in his office, and the House had every confidence in him—[*cheers*]—and if the right hon. Gentleman would bring to bear his experience and the strong economic tendencies of the Secretary of the Treasury, who had not yet forgotten all the doctrines which he used to preach—[*laughter*]—these grievances might be remedied.

MR. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said that the tardiness of bringing prisoners to trial was a question of great importance. But he could not see how it would be possible to bring in a Bill dispensing with bail altogether, or allowing prisoners returned for trial out on their own recognizances. He thought the question of bail must be left to the magistrates or the Judges, and his experience was that in recent years magistrates and Judges had become more liberal in the exercise of that discretion. He thought the remedy was to be found in the greater utilisation of the County Court Judges. The County Court Judges were not employed continuously, as were the Judges of the High Courts, and as they got salaries that recompensed them for the whole of their time, he had never been able to understand why they should be half the year idle, and why they should not be utilised, like the County Court Judges of Ireland, to deliver the gaols or transact criminal business at every Session. Recent appointments to County Court Judgeships included men of great experience in civil and criminal matters, equal in many respects to appointments in the High Courts; and the remedy for the grievance to which the late Attorney General had drawn attention was to enable the County Court Judges to try prisoners returned for trial and compel them to hold their Courts more promptly.

Sir ROBERT REID said he had not suggested the introduction of a Bill to make it compulsory on magistrates and Judges to allow bail in all cases; but he thought that unless there were strong reasons to the contrary poor prisoners should be allowed out on their own personal recognizances. A prisoner had the right of appeal to a Judge sitting in Chambers when bail was refused, and it must be apparent that that was a privilege open only to fairly well-to-do men. He thought the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University was one in favour of which a great deal might be said. He did not see why the County Court Judges should not be placed, as they could be placed, on the Commission of Assize.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall) did not see why the Law Courts should be shut up 15 or 16 weeks each year, any more than the Foreign Office, the Treasury, or any other Department of the State. He thought the remedy for the grievance complained of was to put an end to the long vacations, and to allow each individual Judge to get his holidays as it was found convenient. Again, in other Departments of the State there was a rule by which men were compelled to retire from the Service at a certain age; and he could not see why that rule should not apply to the Judges—

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: Order, order! The question before the Committee is not the salaries of the Judges.

Mr. GEDGE said he would defer his remarks on the subject till another time.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he sympathised with the hardship inflicted on poor prisoners by not bringing them speedily to trial, but he thought that if poor prisoners were allowed out on their own recognizances, a large proportion of them would never be seen again. It had also been suggested that the County Court Judges should have the power of dealing with criminal cases. That would involve an increase in the number of County Court Judges to try the prisoners. Another proposal was that the Judges should take no holidays at all, or fewer holidays. It therefore came to this, that if all the suggestions were adopted there would be fewer prisoners to try, more Judges to try them, and fewer holidays on the part of the Judges. He thought they ought to be adopted, for they would ultimately lead to a great diminution in legal charges. There was no doubt that the Judges took holidays altogether too long, and that they did not retire with that promptitude that was due to the junior members of the Bar. [*Laughter.*]

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: The remarks of the hon. Gentleman are now out of order.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he should object to the allowance of £7 10s. per day to the Judges while on circuit. The Judges got large and adequate salaries; first-class railway fares and lodgings for nothing. Was it for food they got the additional £7 10s. per day? He thought it was hardly credible that a Judge could eat £7 10s. per day.

Mr. GEDGE said he did not think there could be much objection to paying this £7 10s. to Judges who were under 65 years of age, but there seemed to be some objection to paying it to those who exceeded that age.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: The hon. Member is now trying to get behind my ruling.

Mr. GEDGE asked whether it would be in order to discuss the manner in which Judges might be unable to perform their duties?

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said it would not be in order to discuss the question of retirement of Judges upon the present item.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES moved to reduce the Vote by £100, in order that they might obtain an assurance on the subject.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) hoped the hon. Member would not press the Amendment. His experience had been that it was extremely difficult for the Treasury or the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with matters of legal reform in so far as the question of expenditure was concerned. He had had a try many a time in different parts of the United Kingdom, and he could not say that he had hitherto been very successful. All these matters had to be done in consultation, sometimes with the Judges themselves, sometimes with the Lord Chancellor, or other equally high personages, and it was very difficult for the Treasury, whatever their predilections might be, to carry them into effect. The hon. Member for King's Lynn, he understood, had referred to an annual salary instead of the payment per day, and he would promise to look into the matter.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn; Vote agreed to.

4. £5,177, to complete the sum for Land Registry.

Mr. HALDANE said the Establishment to which this Vote related might be made more use of. This Establishment was the pivot of the reform which the Government had embodied in the Land Transfer Bill, which was in progress in another place.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said the question of legislation dealing with Land Transfer could not be discussed on that Vote.

Mr. HALDANE said he trusted the office would be made more useful by the passage of the Land Transfer Bill this Session.

Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) said nothing could be more cumbrous and costly than the system of land transfer in this country. He thought if they were to reduce the fees of the Land Registry Office and bring them more into conformity with those in force on the Continent, the usefulness of the office would be increased. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would re-appoint the Committee in regard to this matter in accordance with the promise which he (the Leader of the House) made last year. That Committee took a great deal of evidence all on one side of the question, that was the lawyer's side, and there was no evidence taken on the other side. Among the Parliamentary Papers which had been circulated was a Report of the Assistant Registrar of the Land Registry Office, as to the system of Land Transfer on the Continent, which seemed to be giving complete satisfaction. In some countries thousands of pounds in land could be transferred for £1 10s.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS said if the hon. Gentleman had any suggestion to make by means of which the Land Registry Office could be made more useful under the existing legislation, he would be in order, but if the only suggestion he could make was that certain fresh legislation should be introduced in order to make the office more useful, he would not be in order.

Mr. LAMBERT said that if the fees were reduced it would be an enormous benefit to some mortgagees. He concluded by urging that the Committee should be re-appointed and the whole matter thoroughly sifted, so as to make the office more useful and efficient.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said he had not the slightest recollection of having given such a promise with reference to the Committee. He would communicate with his right hon. Friend the Leader of the House and ascertain whether a promise was given on the point. With regard to the Office itself he agreed that possibly some reduction of fees might be desirable, but he would point out that until quite recently the complaint used to be made that the expenditure upon the Office was not in any way justified. At the present time, however, there was a very considerable profit from this Office to the country, a profit of something like £13,000 a year. There was a continuous increase in the usefulness of the Office. Whereas in 1893 there were 357 conveyances and transfers through the Office, in 1896 there were 525. The total transactions through the Office had increased from 840 in 1893 to 1,116 in 1896. He thought the Office was continually growing in favour, and he hoped the public year by year would appreciate it more.

SIR R. REID thought the fees were a great deal too high, and that the profit which the Exchequer was deriving from the Office was too great, and was calculated to retard to some extent an advance in the registration of land. There was another reason which was of a more delicate character, but which it was possible to advert to without making—as he would be far from making—the least suggestion of anything but perfectly honourable conduct. But many solicitors, who were naturally the trusted advisers of the owners of land, did not believe in the present system of land registration, and thought it open to many objections. He himself believed it was far from perfect. But even now the Act establishing that office was a most useful Act, and if solicitors had been able to regard it in the way he did, more estates would have been registered there. No doubt one great cause of the inutility of the Act was that it had not inspired confidence among the solicitors of the country. The Committee on the subject of land transfer, of which he was Chairman two years ago, was not appointed, because there had never before been inquiry into it. During the last 40 years there had been at least half-a-dozen Inquiries by Royal Commissions and Select Committees of both Houses. There had been four or five inquiries even during the last twenty years. For 200 years there had been inquiries going on, even since that industrious man Cromwell expressed an opinion on the subject which he himself believed was justified by the facts. But the inquiry of 1895 arose from the special circumstances that the Government had made a bargain with the Incorporated Law Society that their objections to the Land Transfer Bill should be fairly heard, that the evidence should be limited to a certain period, and that meanwhile the Bill should be Read a Second time. The most valuable evidence was given. Mr. Lake, one of the first conveyancers in this country, gave evidence which impressed him, as Chairman of the Committee, greatly. It was temperate, reasonable, and showed complete mastery of the subject. After hearing all that was to be said against the Bill the Committee was dissolved, and had never been reappointed. He did not think there was any necessity for the reappointment of the Committee, because he believed those who studied the evidence would be satisfied that a decided measure of reform was needed. Any further inquiry, after all the inquiries that had taken place, would simply delay registration. He hoped that, at an early date, the Government would bring before the House the Bill which had been introduced into the House of Lords. Whatever assistance it was in his power to render to pass that Bill, he would most gladly render. Meantime he did not think they ought to make any complaint of land registry, because he believed that the officers of the Land Registry Office, who had shown much zeal and ability in fulfilling their duties under the present law, would be able to work any new system with the most complete success.

MR. HALDANE said it was true that the most valuable evidence was given before the Select Committee. But this winter a small Departmental Committee was appointed to scrutinise the evidence taken, and to consider such changes in the Government reforms which would bring them into harmony with the evidence. This had been done, and he might say that the Land Transfer Bill was no longer a contentious Measure. The business of the Land Registry could be put completely on its proper basis without the controversies they formerly had. There was now no controversy between the Government and the leading opponents of this reform, and there should be no difficulty in getting it through easily and quickly. He reminded the Committee with regard to the fees, that the Land Registry Office now transacted the business of the Middlesex Land Registry, and a large proportion of the fees came from the latter, which had nothing to do with land transfer, but with the registry of deeds. Without the consent of the noble Lord, who received a third of the fees derived, he did not know how the fees could be altered. He himself hoped the system would not be perpetuated when an opportunity occurred for putting an end to it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he was not in a position to make any pledge to the Committee with regard to the Land Transfer Bill. It was receiving the anxious attention of the

Lord Chancellor, and he hoped to pass a Measure through the Upper House which would not be open to the objection to which his previous efforts in the same direction had been. If there was no opposition to the Bill in this House, he hoped that before long the Bill would become law. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. LAMBERT said the ex-Attorney General was a great authority on the subject, and if he did not think the reappointment necessary, he himself was prepared to acquiesce. But if making the Land Registry Office more efficient depended on the consent of the lawyers, it would probably remain inefficient for a long time. Its greater efficiency would take bread and cheese out of their mouths, and to that they would never consent.

Mr. GEDGE said he thought he might claim on behalf of his profession that they had sufficient common sense to know that they could not set up the interests of their class against the public interests. They did not desire that the business which they did should be done at the expense of the taxpayers—they did not think that right; but he was sure they would heartily welcome any system of land registration which was good for their clients. The objections they had to land registration as it now stood were not universal. The present system suited no particular estates, and all who had to do with such estates carried them into the Land Registry. The objections were not universally applicable, because if so, solicitors of the present generation—at least those who had attained his age—would carry all estates into the Land Registry Office. Then they would make their fortunes and be able to retire comfortably, and leave their successors to get what they could out of it. He was glad to learn that the Incorporated Law Society were satisfied with the Bill as it stood, so he hoped there would be a re-appointment of the Committee of that House, and that upon the evidence they had before them the Bill would be Read a Second time, and referred to the Standing Committee on Law, where minor defects would be eradicated.

Mr. HALDANE wished to say that he had no authority to say anything on behalf of the Incorporated Law Society. But Mr. Lake, who gave valuable evidence before the Committee, had assented to the changes made in the Bill to make it agree with the evidence given before the Committee, and had written publicly to the newspapers, saying that he was satisfied with the Bill which he once opposed, and that so far from opposing it, he was in favour of giving every assistance to pass it into law.

Mr. WARNER said that in spite of what had been said by the lawyers who had taken part in the Debate, there was a feeling of distrust as to their policy in reference to the Bill. He asked for some statement on behalf of the Government that they would try and reduce the fees in the Land Registry Office. He hoped that the Law Officers of the Crown would act so disinterestedly as to reduce the fees which were charged in the Land Registry Office in connection with transactions out of which the legal profession did so well. If the fees were reduced more and more estates would go through the office, and its business would increase.

Mr. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) could assure the Committee that both solicitors and the Bar were honestly endeavouring to see what could be accomplished in the direction of land transfer.

Mr. ALFRED HOPKINSON (Wilts, Cricklade) urged upon the Government the importance of bringing the Measure dealing with land transfer before the House, so that provision might be made for a much more extended system of land transfer by registration than they had at present. As a matter of fact, lawyers had not been the opponents of the principle of land transfer by registration, but what they had opposed was ill-considered schemes. For many years lawyers had been constantly urging the importance of the introduction of a sound scheme of transfer by registration, and he hoped the Government would recognise the necessity of dealing with the matter.

Vote agreed to.

5. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

"That a sum, not exceeding £23,071, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries and expenses connected with the County Courts."

*MR. HARRISON pointed out that the receipts from litigants in the County Courts reached the enormous sum of £465,000. The expenses were put at £457,000, which balanced it within £9,000, and the Consolidated Fund paid for the buildings, for the rates and taxes on the buildings, and £82,000 for the Judges. That being so, he ventured to think that something should be done by the Treasury to reduce the fees which were paid by litigants, and which were now much too great.

SIR R. REID observed that this Vote included an item of £3,000 for the conveyance of persons committed to prison. These persons were unhappy debtors, who were sent to prison, in the eyes of the law, because they had been guilty of contumacious conduct in not obeying the orders of the Court by paying debts due by them. The fact was they were sent to prison because they could not pay the sums of money which the County Court Judge had ordered they should pay. He thought this or any other occasion ought to be utilised for the purpose of pointing out what really went on under this system of County Court debtors' summonses. County Court Judges were required to make orders that the money should be paid within a month or six weeks, or by some such instalments, and then they made a contingent committal order, so that if the man did not pay within the time specified he was sent to prison, where he was lodged at the expense of Her Majesty's subjects at large. That was the system, and it was nothing in the world but a modified form of the old system of imprisonment for debt. It derived its origin from that old system, and, to his mind, the time had now come when it should be abolished altogether. [" Hear, hear!"] A Committee sat some two or three years ago, and made rather an inconsequential Report, the County Court Judges differing in giving their evidence on the subject. But the question presented a broad principle, which was whether or not they were to allow persons to be sent to prison for not obeying orders to pay money. If they had no property upon which execution could be levied, the creditor must stand his chance and pay the penalty of having given credit where he ought not to have given it. [" Hear, hear!"] There was one point which made this matter specially hard. Supposing a debtor owed more than £50, he could get rid of all liability for imprisonment or anything else by becoming a bankrupt. It was the small debtor who owed 10s. or 20s., or £10 or £15 at the outside, who was the victim of this abominable system by which he was sent to prison for not paying his debts. [" Hear, hear!"] It was ridiculous to say such a man was sent to prison not for not paying his debts, but for contumacy in not obeying the order of the Judge, and that imprisonment for debt no longer existed. It was the fact that imprisonment for debt did really exist in such cases as he had instanced. He hoped, therefore, the Government would take the matter in hand and bring about a small but valuable reform which would be acceptable to everybody except that class of tradesmen who gave credit knowing they had behind them the County Court, which enabled them to put the screw on unfortunate debtors by fear of imprisonment. [" Hear, hear!"]

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said a worse class of sharks did not exist in this country than those persons to whom tradesmen sold their debts at about a shilling in the pound, and he was happy to think that the majority of County Court Judges themselves strongly protested against this practice, and that they had of recent years more and more set their faces against it. [" Hear, hear!"] He hoped the occasional pressure which had been applied in that House in questions put to the Attorney General would be discouraged. He was quite sure that if hon. Members who had put questions trying to get harder treatment for the poor in this respect really knew the facts of the practice to which he had referred they would not ask the questions again. The authorities deserved to be supported in the attempts they had made by circulars to County Court Judges to discourage the practice. The majority of those Judges, he believed, had done enormous public service in recent years by discouraging the practice, and that House ought to support them and strengthen their hands instead of trying to weaken them by the asking of such questions as had been put this Session. He thought powerful support might be given to a better view of such question, if from time to time some of the strongest County Court Judges were placed on the Bench of the High Court.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said he agreed that, where a County Court Judge found that a debt was being enforced for the benefit of the person who had bought the debt, the power of imprisonment should not be exercised, and he thought this was recognised by most County Court Judges. But he could not go as far as the late Attorney General with reference to this practice of what the hon. and learned Gentleman, he thought, wrongly called imprisonment for debt. He knew from the County Court Judges themselves that an order for imprisonment was never made unless they were satisfied that the man had had the means to pay and would not. ["Hear, hear!"] He quite agreed that ordinary imprisonment for debt ought to be put an end to altogether, and that they had done to a large extent. But it must be remembered that there were not only cases where a traveller had gone round and given credit, but cases where money had been lent and where work had been done for wages, and yet the man who really ought to pay would not pay. He knew from the County Court Judges throughout the length and breadth of the land that, as far as they could, they never made an order unless they were satisfied that there had been that sort of unfair keeping back of a small sum of money from a man who really wanted it. He thought a little too much had been said in favour of the man who was avoiding the payment of debts he could pay, and not quite enough consideration had been shown for the small plaintiffs, who really very often wanted the money quite as much. Therefore, while they ought not to encourge the practice to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had referred, on the other hand they ought to see that where there was a small sum due to a plaintiff and where there had been a contumacious refusal to pay, the County Court Judges ought to have the power of imprisonment. As he had already said, he did not believe that Connty Court Judges as a rule ever made an order except they honestly believed that a man had had the means of payment and would not pay, and in those circumstances he felt it was too strong a measure to abolish this power altogether. Such a course would, he thought, encourage that class of persons who would not pay debts that they could properly pay.

SIR C. CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said he had listened to this Debate with some interest, inasmuch as a good many years ago he succeeded in abolishing altogether exactly the same practice in Scotland as was now said not to exist in England. In Scotland the people were not imprisoned for debt for some centuries. They were put there for high treason—[*laughter*]—because they refused to obey the order of the Crown, as conveyed to them through the Judges, to pay debts for the payment of which they had no money. In the case of Scotland, they had a Committee on the subject, and they found that imprisonment for debt was generally enforced for the benefit of people who bought up debts at a shilling in the pound; or, at all events, for the benefit of debt-collecting agencies, who constantly made use of the threat of imprisonment in order to get a mother or a brother, or someone else who did not owe the debt, to pay the money. Imprisonment for debt had been altogether abolished in Scotland, and the same law was now applied to the poor man as to the rich man. That surely was an equitable system of law, which they should aim at procuring for England as well as for Scotland. By way of protest against the present system which obtained in England, he begged to move "That Item H, of £3,000, for Conveyance of Persons Committed to Prison, be omitted from the proposed Vote."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it was extremely inconvenient that a question so large should be discussed on a Vote of this kind. The question was a very serious one. It involved such matters as were raised by the Attorney General as to whether they should allow the transferee of a debt to exercise the rights which belonged to the original owner of the debt. He thought they should. If he had bought a debt he had the same right to such powers of collecting as the law gave the original owner. Other matters were involved. There was the question of the injury that might be inflicted on the debtors themselves, because they might be refused credit. The rights of property were involved, and he thought it was impossible, on a Vote of this kind, to discuss the matter. If it was desired to alter the law there was a proper method to do it. It was not proper on a side issue like this, involving relatively a small sum and really no principle, to raise a matter which really did involve an important principle requiring adequate discussion.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Boroughs) said he agreed with the Attorney General generally that if they took the whole course of County Court proceedings over any year, he thought it would be found that in no case was anybody sent to prison unless there had been some substantial evidence laid before the Court that he had had the means to pay the whole or some part of the debt and had contumaciously refused to obey the order of the Court. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not approve of the credit system created by the facilities given for the collection of debt by the County Court system; but still, he believed, it was necessary to retain the present power in the hands of the Court. While he would vote against the reduction, he would like to suggest to the Attorney General whether it would not be possible to put some amending words in the Act of 1869 which might lighten the difficulties of the County Court Judge and give him a larger indication of the kind of proof of means on which he should act. The question of the assignment of debts was most difficult from a practical point of view. A man who purchased a debt was as much entitled to sue as the original creditor, and it would be a retrograde step were the House to attempt to fetter him. At the same time abuses had arisen of which the County Court Judges were perfectly alive, and which they were doing everything possible to discourage.

Mr. W. AMBROSE said it was rather a surprise to him to find that when a man was sent to prison for debt the cost of conveying him there came out of public funds. It might, however, be that fees were charged which covered the cost. He had always regarded it as a pretence to say that imprisonment for debt was abolished when they retained the present system. What the County Court Judge did was to ask what a man's wages were, and to estimate what he could spare out of those wages. He did not go into the affairs of the debtor, or take account of his other obligations. Five or six orders might be made against a man, but the County Court Judge did not feel at liberty to take into consideration the orders he had previously made. Why should the man in a humble position of life be punished for debt in a way in which a man in a higher state of prosperity would not be. Was the poor man the only man who was guilty of this offence? He knew that upon one hand it was said if they had not this power they would deprive a man of the means of getting credit. But, on the other hand, it was made the means of mortgaging wages to an extent that was not justified. This was especially the case with regard to travelling dealers who extorted orders from poor people, and relied on this cruel system for securing payment.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES said the hon. Member had forgotten the Administration Order system introduced by the Bankruptcy Act. In the Courts which he knew this system worked very well. The whole position was taken into account, and all practical hardship was done away with.

Sir R. REID said the Administration Order system was an illustration of the difference in the way in which the law treated a small debtor and a large debtor. If a man could afford the luxury of getting into debt for an amount above £50 he could take bankruptcy proceedings himself, and thereby relieve himself from the clutches of any Court, and from the liability to imprisonment. But if the debt was of smaller amount then, although the debtor might by the method of Administration Order, have his debts diminished, he still remained liable to have a mortgage on his future earnings, subject to the penalty of imprisonment if he did not comply with the order made. This was not a very convenient occasion for raising the question. But nowadays Supply afforded almost the only opportunity for bringing forward such matters, and if his hon. Friend went to a division, he would support him.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 54; Noes, 133.—(Division List, No. 189.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

6. £3,400, to complete the sum for Police Courts, London and Sheerness.

*MR. HARRISON called attention to the increasing charge under this head, and alleged that this was due to intrusting the levying of the money in the hands of the Chief Commissioner of Police, instead of placing the control in the hands of a representative body. He stated that when the Act was passed to establish the Metropolitan Police, the rate was limited to 8d. in the pound on the rateable value. It had since been increased 1d. It was levied over the whole area not only of the Metropolis but practically of 20 miles round.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: I do not quite follow how the hon. Gentleman connects his arguments with the Vote.

*MR. HARRISON said he was endeavouring to point out that the expenditure of £12,734 which they now asked for was due to entrusting the levying of it to on unrepresentative body, instead of vesting the control in a representative, and that the expenditure was unduly large in consequence.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: If the hon. Member means to argue that the Metropolitan Police Force ought to be placed under the London County Council, that would require legislation, and would not be in order on the present Vote.

*MR. HARRISON said he did not suggest that there should be any alteration, but he proposed the amount levied in respect of these expenses by the Commissioner of Police should be reduced.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: There are no rates levied in respect of the Metropolitan Police Courts. This is a sum charged on the Exchequer. If the hon. Member raises a question of rates, that cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

*MR. HARRISON said he had proposed to move to reduce the Vote asked for. His argument was that the expenditure of £21,039 was out of all proportion to the duties that were performed, and they would not reach that amount were the management of Committees in other hands, and under a representative body. He urged, therefore, that the Vote should be reduced so as to bring the expenditure on the Metropolitan Police Courts within that reasonable amount which would make them at all events self-supporting out of the fees, and they ought not now to be charged on the Consolidated Fund to the extent proposed by this Vote. There was an expenditure which at present was contributed partly by the Consolidated Fund and partly out of the Metropolitan Police rate. ["No!"]

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: The hon. Member is in error. The Metropolitan Police rate does not arise on this Vote.

*MR. HARRISON pointed out that during the past two or three years this expenditure had been gradually increasing, and it was to this fact he desired to call attention.

Vote agreed to.

7. Motion made and Question proposed:—

> "That a sum, not exceeding £41,107, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the pay and expenses of officers of Metropolitan Police employed on special duties, and the salaries and expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary."

*MR. PICKERSGILL called attention to the subject of police supervision. A large body of opinion existed in this country to the effect that police supervision was the most mischievous expedient ever devised by any country to prevent a man who had once gone wrong from acquiring with reasonable ease a foothold in society again. It was a remarkable fact that at the Central Criminal Court sentences of police supervision had not been imposed for many years, because he believed that the Recorders had been largely influenced by the opinion held and expressed by Colonel Fraser, the late Chief of the City Police. This gentleman held the view that a man who intended to relapse into crime snapped his fingers at police supervision, that was to say he disappeared and never reported himself, whereas the man who had fallen casually and meant to try to lead an honest life was he who reported himself, and by means of constant harrassing was prevented from earning an honest livelihood. He wanted some statistics to show how this system worked, and whether or not the system was a success as measured by its results. Further, he would like to know how many of the persons subject to police supervision actually reported themselves. This information was in the possession of the Criminal Investigation Department. Did the system given the police any effective hold over the habitual criminal, who meant to relapse into crime? He contended that it did not. Would the Home Secretary grant the Return for which he had pressed? Many believed that the system was a failure, and if that was so he thought a *primâ facie* case had been made out for further investigation. A Committee ought to be appointed, by preference a Select Committee; or if that was not thought to be desirable, a Departmental Committee, with two independent Members of the House of Commons upon it. Would the right hon. Gentleman grant such a Committee? He moved "That item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chairman of Commissioners and Directors."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool) said that, as he had explained on a previous occasion, the object of police supervision was not to inflict any extra punishment on criminals. The object was twofold—partly to protect society and partly to render it possible to inflict shorter periods of imprisonment upon prisoners. He had never examined the question in detail, and was not prepared to say whether on the whole the system was a success or not. He quite recognised that it might be very desirable to see how far the results of the system had justified the anticipations of those who introduced it. If, therefore, the hon. Member opposite would communicate to him the kind of information and return which he (Mr. Pickersgill) thought could be supplied he would do his best to provide it. There was no desire on the part of the Home Office or of the police to keep anything back. Undoubtedly the system ought to be clearly understood by the public—["hear, hear!"]—and he was only anxious that the facts should be fully known. If it should appear that the system had not worked satisfactorily he would be quite prepared to consider how it could be improved.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) asked for an explanation with regard to a matter which had caused a great deal of discontent among the Police of London. He referred to the alteration of the system under which boots were supplied to the force. Unless he had been misinformed, the Police were very dissatisfied with the change. They feared that they would be deprived of a great part of the value of the boots at present provided for them.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY assured the noble Lord that the alteration of the system under which boots were supplied to the Police had been accepted by the force by an overwhelming majority, and that he had not heard a single expression of dissatisfaction at the change. When he came into office, an intimation had been given to the force that a money allowance would be given to them in order that they might provide their own boots. At first sight it might be thought that the change would cause the members of the force some pecuniary loss, but he could assure the Committee that the contrary was the case.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) congratulated the Home Office on the adoption of the anthropometric measurement of criminals. The system had been adopted with great advantage in foreign countries, and he had no doubt that it would be scientifically and practically useful in this country also.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY observed that the system was instituted by his predecessor. It was working very well, and was applied throughout the prisons of this country.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

8. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

> "That a sum, not exceeding £420,851, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the expenses of the Prisons in England, Wales and the Colonies."

*Mr. PICKERSGILL drew attention to the shooting of a convict by warders at Dartmoor on Christmas Day. He said that the conduct of the warders had been defended on the ground that it was in accordance with the instructions which they received. One of the orders relating to convict prisons said:—

> "In the case of a convict who is seen to run away or make an attempt to escape, there is so little chance of success when an immediate pursuit can be made that the use of firearms would not be justified."

Those words certainly did not justify the warders' action on the occasion to which he referred. Another of the orders said:—

> "The object of firing being mainly to induce the convict to stop while in the act of effecting his escape, it would be advisable that the first shot at least should be wide of the mark, and if it should be necessary to fire again that the aim should be low, which would avoid the danger of wounding a vital part."

That was very plain, but what were the facts in the case under consideration? The medical evidence showed that the liver and the right lung of the deceased man were torn by 13 slugs. There was some question as to the distance at which the man was from the warders when they fired. On that point there was great conflict of evidence, but the medical evidence did corroborate the testimony of the other convicts, that the distance at which the man was from the warders when he was shot was exceedingly short. His first point, therefore, was that the warders exceeded their instructions, and that they were not justified by the letter of the Standing Order in taking the life of this man. But assuming the warders did not exceed their instructions, on what authority did the right hon. Gentleman and the Prison Commissioners make this order? The right hon. Gentleman relied on an old dictum of the Common Law that a felon might be killed if his escape could not otherwise be prevented; but that dictum came into vogue many centuries ago, and was usually applied in this way, that if a man tried to escape, not from prison, for punishment by imprisonment was not inflicted in those days, but from justice, he might be killed. Punishment for felony in those days was in almost all cases death, and thus then was the closest relation between the risk which a person ran in seeking to evade justice and the risk which he incurred if he submitted to trial. Now punishment for felony might be only a few days' imprisonment, and yet according to the principle relied on by the right hon. Gentleman, if a prisoner, from wantonness or any other cause, tried to escape, a warder might shoot him down. He submitted that it was altogether wrong to base a modern order on this ancient and obsolete rule. Again, a large proportion of the prison population were only misdemeanants and this rule did not apply to them, and if the escape of misdemeanants could be prevented without it, why not the escape of felons? ["Hear, hear!"] It was said that the circumstances of this case had been investigated. They had, but only by a Coroner's jury at Princetown, and he contended that a Coroner's jury drawn from the population in the immediate neighbourhood of a prison could not be considered an independent tribunal. These warders ought to have been put on their trial at the Devon Assizes, but it was too late to do that now. It was not too late, however, to prevent the recurrence of such a thing. The suggestion he made a few weeks ago was a very moderate suggestion—namely, that there should be a Select or Departmental Committee appointed to consider the law and practice with reference to the prevention of the escape of prisoners. ["Hear, hear!"] His final question was, then, would the right hon. Gentleman assent to that very reasonable request? If nothing was done, it would inevitably happen some day or other, with this case as a precedent, that warders would shoot a man down, and would be put in a criminal dock on a charge of murder. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote.

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said he could not complain of the hon. Gentleman having again called the attention of the House to this unfortunate occurrence. Everyone must regret that, in the execution of their duty, the warders in charge of a gang of prisoners unfortunately killed a man. The Standing Orders which governed the case had been revised from time to time, and ultimately assumed their present shape under the advice of the present Lord James and the ex-Lord Chancellor. They had been frequently considered by the Law Officers, and had given the greatest possible anxiety to those who had had to frame them; but in the state of things which existed at Dartmoor, where large gangs of men worked in the open, it was difficult to conceive how orders could be drawn in such a way as to insure that firearms should only be used in such a way as only to stop locomotion. He had satisfied himself, after the most careful inquiry by one of the directors of the prison, and after considering the fact that a dense fog existed at the time of the occurrence, and that a determined attempt was made to escape by these men, who well knew the risk they were running—he was satisfied that the warders did no more than their duty in firing at the unfortunate man who lost his life. As far as he had ascertained the facts, the nearest warder must have been 20 yards from the man, and the furthest about 50 yards. The escaping prisoner, in a thick fog, was getting over a sort of embankment in a crouching position, at the moment the warder, whose clear duty it was to stop his escape, fired, and unfortunately the result was to cause his death, which was, of course, very much to be regretted. He had not been able to find any fault with the warder for what he did. There were 50 or 60 convicts in charge of only 11 warders, and, therefore, he did not think the warder could be blamed for what he did. He was asked whether he would agree to the appointment of a Select or Departmental Committee to inquire what ought to be the regulations in this respect. He was now taking what practical steps he could to alter these orders, and he was extremely anxious that nothing of the kind should happen again. The last fatal occurrence was, happily, 23 years ago. He did not see how, in the case of outdoor gangs working in unenclosed land, it was possible to avoid the use of firearms in the last resort to prevent escapes. He would be very glad if it could be avoided, and he was now reviewing the whole question, both with a view to preventing escapes, and also, as far as rules could do so, to prevent fatal results. He hoped hon. Members would be satisfied with the assurance that he was doing his best now practically to secure the safe control of these convicts, so as not to let them loose on the people all over the country, by some amendments of the Standing Orders. The hon. Member spoke of the unsatisfactory nature of the coroner's inquest. Well, he knew something of Dartmoor and Princetown, and he thought a jury assembled at Princetown were not unlikely to do their duty in bringing in a verdict against warders. On this occasion the jury found that these warders had only done their duty, and that was the opinion that he had formed. He could assure the House that he should do his best to amend the Standing Orders. He hoped that this would be satisfactory.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock) thought that the warders had a considerable grievance. They had the warders compared with the London police, but as so compared the warders had a considerable grievance. The London police joined at the age of 21, and after 26 years' service they could voluntarily retire on two-thirds their pay. Thus the London policeman could retire at 47. He was not saying that that was too liberal, but he did say that the state of the warders as compared with the London police was not what it ought to be. A warder could not retire until he was 64 years of age. The work of a warder, he had no doubt, was harder and much more dangerous and disagreeable than the work of a policeman. The hours of the warder were longer than those of a London policeman. In one case it was eight hours a day, and in the other ten hours. There was also a question as to the clerks and storekeepers, who joined under a special agreement, which was a privileged one. They joined under nomination, and they had to pay a fee of £3. By that payment they were led to believe that they would have certain advantages not possessed by other clerks. It was said at the time of their nomination that they would receive £400 a year salary. What they contended was that the conditions explicitly laid down should be fulfilled. He asked the Home Secretary that full consideration should be given to the grievances of these men.

General GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said he should like to add his appeal to that which had just been made with regard to the case of the warders, who, many thought, ought to be able to retire at an earlier age. At the same time they wanted to have a little more freedom. Their employment was very laborious and monotonous, and he hoped the Home Secretary would see that more opportunities of recreation were provided for them at the time they were not on duty. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said he entirely agreed with what had been said with regard to the prison staff. He had himself brought forward their case, but in vain. He had considered the case very carefully in all its bearings, and he had no hesitation in saying that the treatment they had received was discreditable to the Administration. He did not believe there was a man sitting on the Government Benches who would think of treating any servant as these warders were kept as to the terms of service, as to their families, and as to their promotions. They were men who had been misled. He was sick and tired of urging their claims. He had been into a large number of prisons, local and convict, and he had no hesitation in saying that in many prisons he would rather be in the position of a prisoner than a warder. There was no comparison between a London policeman and that of a prison warder. The warder's position was most depressing and most responsible. He was often in immediate danger, of which he was perfectly conscious, and yet he must not admit it even by a look. The warders had to keep their tempers—one of the most important qualifications. Surely these men should not be left suffering under a sense of injustice. ["Hear, hear!"] What was the promotion for these men? A matter of a few shillings a week for men who had served five, ten, or 20 years. Then, again, with regard to sleeping out, they had a very small allowance, and they would be glad to sleep out much oftener than they are allowed. They ought to be allowed more for lodging allowance, or, at any rate, if they did lodge outside they might be allowed to live more like human beings than they were. The warders were in charge of men who, after all, were just like Members of the House of Commons though they were convicts. If hon. Members' antecedents and surroundings had been like the convicts he wondered how many hon. Members would be very much better. Convicts were human and were amenable to the influences which affected humanity. The warders had absolute authority over them, and if the warders were not men who could exercise self-control, if they were not themselves in a peaceful state of mind, if they were suffering under a sense of wrong and injustice, it was very likely they would make the convicts suffer more than they need. That there were men in the prison service who were horrible tyrants to the men under them could not be denied, and he supposed it was almost impossible to prevent it. He asked, however, that the warders should not be men of a discontented class as they were now. Wherever promotion was possible promotion should be given, where there were vacancies they should be filled up, and everything should be done which would make the life of the men as comfortable as the circumstances would permit. There was one other point he wished to raise. He had reason to believe that, in one prison at least—in Dartmoor—there was a system under which warders could obtain drink within the prison walls either for cash or on credit. Some of the warders had taken very extensive credit; indeed, he was afraid to mention the sums of money which three warders owed for drink. He feared that in view of the largeness of the bills it was perfectly impossible that the three warders could have done their duty properly. Whether the system he referred to existed elsewhere he did not know, but surely it was most important that amongst men who had charge of convicts sobriety should be strictly enforced.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said that, as the representative of a large number of warders, he had on more than one occasion pressed upon the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessor the grievances under which warders suffered. There was a good deal in what fell from the hon. Member for East Donegal; if warders were discontented it stood to reason injury would be done to their work. He did not believe there was anything like tyranny in convict prisons, but there was no doubt that if warders felt they had considerable grievances, as they did, the probability was they would not treat the prisoners with that care and consideration which even prisoners ought to receive. He could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman might well consider the great hardships of the warders' position. Its unpleasantness was indescribable when it was compared with that of the Metropolitan policemen. The last time he was at a convict prison he was told it was very difficult to get work out of convicts, and that the work of a convict was only about half as valuable as that of a free man. The Committee could realise the driving which must be required from the warders under such circumstances. The case which the hon. Member for Bethnal Green had cited showed very clearly what an enormous responsibility was thrown upon warders, a responsibility out of all proportion to that which was thrown upon a policeman. He trusted that the Home Secretary would turn his attention to the grievances of the men, and be able to find some redress.

Mr. W. O. CLOUGH (Portsmouth) said there was a large number of warders in the constituency he represented, and he could assure the Home Secretary that the feeling of discontent which had been mentioned was very widespread. It was very important that every class of public servants should have before them the prospect of promotion, and that they should feel they would be justly dealt with when vacancies occurred. The warders were undoubtedly dissatisfied, and it was in the general interest that the Home Secretary should endeavour to give them redress.

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said that he was not at all disposed to underrate the position and responsibilities of the warders in convict prisons; and the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had given ample reasons why prison warders should be not only first-class public servants, but men contented with their position. He had not been aware that there was anything like the spirit of unrest and discontent among the warders which had been represented during the discussion. Four or five years ago the whole case was gone into by a Committee, presided over by Lord de Ramsay. The Committee made certain representations as to salaries, and for once the Treasury gave way, and something was done to improve the conditon of the warders. Since then further demands had arisen, especially in regard to pensions. He was not prepared to admit that the prison warders stood on quite the same footing as the Metropolitan Police, but he was aware of their special responsibilities and of their tedious and solitary duties. The hon. and learned Member for East Donegal had said that throughout the prison service generally there was a better and more humane spirit than there used to be, and there was no class of public servants whose interests were more deserving of attention than the warders. As to the stagnation of promotion he had not received complaints. He did not know whether promotion was always within one prison, but the point was worthy of consideration. He would give his attention to all the points which had been raised. He would inquire into the case at Dartmoor. He had heard that there was a system there by which warders could obtain beer, but it had never been suggested that the system had led to excessive drinking. As to the prison clerks, he could not reopen the question of the £3 for examination. The changes of the last two years had materially improved the position of the prison clerks. The creation of a new class of governors and storekeepers had been a great boon to them; four or five promotions had been made already, and indeed all the higher posts of the profession were now open to these clerks.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR said that if the right hon. Gentleman would compare the Returns for English and Irish prisons, nominally administered under the same law, he would find that the number of reports and punishments was much higher in the former than the latter. In Irish prisons, for instance, corporal punishment was almost unknown. It was significant, too, that the rates of mortality, sickness, insanity, and suicide were much lower in Irish than in English prisons.

General GOLDSWORTHY said that the warders complained of the excessive strain sometimes put upon them.

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said that though he would look into the points raised he could not promise to satisfy them.

Vote agreed to.

On the return of the Chairman of Ways and Means, after the usual interval,

9. £126,130, to complete the sum for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) referred to the necessity for the reform of the management of reformatory and industrial school ships. They were chiefly maintained by public funds, which came to a large sum in the aggregate, and the country did not get its money's worth in return. A reformatory school ship which did nothing but reform and instruct was the worst class of school to which children who had done wrong could be sent, unless they were trained to become sailors. The number of lads from reformatory and industrial school ships sent to sea had considerably diminished. If these ships were properly worked they would become important feeders for the waste of life which went on in the Mercantile Marine. The Mercantile Marine had always been looked upon as a reserve for the Navy in time of war. It was no longer so, and the places of English seamen were being taken by foreigners. His argument was vindicated by the Report of the Departmental Committee. It recommended that 13 should be the minimum age for admission to the ships, and at 15 boys should be sent to sea. Reformatory and industrial school ships should be affiliated with similar schools on land, from which boys could volunteer for a sea training. The schools on land did not like parting with their best boys, but that was a trivial matter compared with the training of the boys on the ships. The naval inspection of the ships had been attended by beneficial results as regards discipline and industrial training. But a proper staff was required on board. Then the code for the education of the boys needed revision. The complaint was that the same code was used for boys of 14 and 15 which was used in land schools for boys of 11. The main point was that the schools should be regarded by the Home Office as Government institutions, which they really were. The private subscriptions and the contributions of the parents were so small as to be almost beneath notice. The schools were maintained largely by School Boards and County Councils. He trusted the Home Office would carefully consider the recommendations of the Departmental Committee and endeavour to carry them out. Another point was that wherever there was a ship there should always be a playground on shore. These, however, were matters of detail. The main question was the use of the ships for the benefit of the country; as it was, the country's money was now being expended uselessly. It was the duty of statesmen to face this question of the diminution in their sea power, and in the manning of their Mercantile Marine. There were the men to their hand, and they ought to make the best use of them. This was a question which would not brook delay, for they were going from bad to worse. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would give the matter his most earnest consideration.

Sir C. CAMERON, having been the Chairman of a Departmental Committee which a few years ago had among its duties to examine into the question of juvenile delinquents and reformatory and industrial schools in Scotland, desired to say a few words on some reforms which did not involve legislation, and which might be carried through with advantage. He quite agreed with the gallant Admiral that it was a great pity boys educated in training ships should in such very small proportions find their way into the Navy. He remembered being very much struck by the fact, as shown before the Committee, that only a small proportion went to sea at all, and those who did went not in British, but generally, by preference, in Swedish vessels, the explanation given being that the Masters of the Swedish vessels treated them better and looked more carefully after them than the Masters of English ships. Everything should be done that was possible to provide from these training ships, for which the nation had to pay, a supply of sailors for our Mercantile Marine. The Departmental Committee to which he referred made a number of recommendations, some of which were purely matters of administration, and one or two of which would, at all events, recommend themselves on their very face to the common sense of the Home Secretary. The members of the Committee on visiting the prisons were very much struck by the fact that a large number of the prisoners had formerly been inmates of reformatory and industrial schools. They found that there was a much larger proportion of ex-reformatory boys and girls than ex-industrial school boys and girls. The members of the Committee had a number of conversations with these ex-reformatory pupils to find out how it was that so many of them lapsed into their old habits of crime. One cause was described in a paragraph of the Report of the Committee, which set forth that many of the ex-reformatory pupils stated that when they returned to their native towns after discharge they got among old companions, that youths so discharged, though not personally known, were recognised as coming from a reformatory by the clothes they wore and were so introduced into the set. The paragraph also stated that, while so much money was expended on reformatories it was folly to permit the work to be neutralised to a great extent for the sake of petty economies. No trouble or expense should be spared to remove youths from reformatories from their old associations or criminal surroundings. Many of the reformatories had a large web of cloth; each boy, on leaving, was given a suit of clothes made from this web, and when he went back to his native town all the other boys from the reformatory recognised him, so that he was at once drawn into a set of reformatory boys and drifted back into crime. This was a matter (said the hon. Member) which could easily be put an end to. A letter from the Home Office pointing out the evil results of such a practice would suffice to put an end to it. There was another matter which applied specially to reformatory and industrial schools in Scotland, and that was that the education was not given according to the Scotch, but according to the English code. The result was that an ex-reformatory or industrial school pupil, the moment he opened his mouth on any subject connected with his school life, was ever marked as having come from one of these institutions. That was most undesirable. What was wanted was to cut such a youth adrift from his old associations, to free him from all criminal companions, and give him such a fresh start in life as would insure him becoming an honest member of society in future. But that was not all. The Committee found in the Girls' Industrial School at Dundee a number of girls going through the fifth English standard. About half had already passed once in that standard; a quarter had passed twice and were going up a third time; while one girl had passed it three times and was going up a fourth. If the education was conducted under the Scotch code the pupils could go on to higher standards, and in the case, especially, of industrial school children, who were constantly transferred to Board Schools, a source of dislocation in their educational career would be avoided, and general convenience would be consulted if the system of education pursued in the industrial and reformatory schools were made conformable with that which was carried on throughout the country. He thought the time the children were kept in industrial schools might with advantage be shortened, and the money more advantageously expended in sending them into some other districts of the country, or to Colonies where they would get into a totally fresh community and where nothing of their past could be raked up against them. He thought, if the right hon. Gentleman would carefully consider the matter, he would see that it was absurd to send children from the reformatories earmarked by their clothes, and by the system of education which was different to that generally carried on throughout the country, and that he would bring about a change in these respects.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY agreed that in order to secure the future of those who had been sent to reformatories it was essential that they should not be earmarked with the reformatory stamp, and he certainly regretted that there should be any establishment in the United Kingdom which sent out any of its inmates in the manner the hon. Baronet had described. He had always understood that a young fellow who had served his time in a reformatory was supplied with clothing which could not identify him as belonging to any establishment which could in the remotest way be called penal. With reference to the question of teaching according to the Scotch Code, the hon. Member was probably aware that arrangements were now in progress whereby the inspection of Scotch reformatory and industrial schools would in future be under the responsibility of the Secretary for Scotland, who was naturally more acquainted with Scotch habits and wishes than an unfortunate Saxon like himself. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] He hoped that might possibly meet the difficulty as to the teaching arrangements to which the hon. Baronet had referred. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Eastbourne had several times called attention to the training ships of this country, and he had, with some reason, felt himself justified in saying that these training ships were not recruiting the Mercantile Marine in the manner he desired to see that service recruited. He was afraid that, though they might send boys to these training ships, they could not make them go to sea. He did not know how that could be cured. He had endeavoured to read the whole of the voluminous Report referred to by his hon. and gallant Friend, and he would use his best efforts to give effect to the recommendations which were made. The question of these reformatory industrial schools had been considered by a Committee appointed by his predecessor more than a year ago, but it was extremely difficult to arrive at any tangible result from their long deliberations. Therefore he did not think it could be expected that, either on the general question or on the particular question his hon. and gallant Friend desired to bring before the Committee, he should give a definite opinion that night. But he could promise him that he should give his best attention to the subject, and he should be glad to welcome any practical suggestion he had to make. He believed very much in the possible utility of these training ships under proper management, and any suggestion which tended to make them better and more adequate for their purpose would certainly receive the attention of the Home Office.

Admiral FIELD thanked the Home Secretary for his sympathetic reply, but reminded the right hon. Gentleman that his special point was that magistrates should not commit to the ships, and then they would only have volunteers from the land schools going to the ships because they wanted to go to sea. Let magistrates commit to land schools, and the question would solve itself.

Vote agreed to.

10. £21,954, to complete the sum for Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum.—Agreed to.

11. £62,630, to complete the sum for Law Charges and Courts of Law, Scotland.—Agreed to.

12. £28,961, to complete the sum for Register House, Edinburgh.—Agreed to.

13. £3,350, to complete the sum for Crofters' Commission.—Agreed to.

14. £52,277, to complete the sum for Prisons, Scotland.

Mr. R. WALLACE (Perth) asked for some information as to the policy of the Prison Commissioners with regard to the general prison at Perth. That prison was built to accommodate nearly 1,000 prisoners, but at present it was practically empty. They would all rejoice if the prison were empty owing to the diminution of the criminal class in Scotland, but unfortunately that was not the case. The prison was empty as the result of a new system which had been inaugurated by the Prison Commissioners of Scotland. Until very recently long-sentence prisoners from every part of Scotland were conveyed to the prison at Perth, which was specially arranged for their accommodation. He thought that several hundred thousand pounds were spent in its construction, and yet at the present time it was practically empty, and was only used as a local house of detention. It was suggested that the new system was inaugurated from motives of economy in order to save the railway fares of prisoners from different parts of Scotland to Perth. But about two years ago, when the prison was made use of, the annual cost of bringing the prisoners to Perth was only £400. Therefore the economy which had been inaugurated by the Prison Commissioners of Scotland was, that in order to save £400 a year they had spent within the last two years a capital sum of £100,000 in the construction of a prison at Barlinnie, near Glasgow, and £20,000 to add to the accommodation of the prison at Dundee. He did not oppose this Vote in any hostile sense. He was only anxious to obtain from the Lord Advocate some information as to what the Prison Commissioners proposed in the end to do—whether they intended to practically abolish the Perth prison, or whether it was intended to return to the system recommended in past times of using it as a long-sentence prison.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he thought the facts of this case, which he was glad his hon. Friend had brought forward, required some explanation on the part of the Scotch Office. He thought many of the best authorities on prisons had entirely gone against the concentration of a large number of prisoners under one roof. The idea was rather to have a small number of prisons, where the prisoners could be kept under the immediate eye and study of the governor and the chaplain, and under the immediate supervision of the medical officer. He understood that this prison at Barlinnie was not only too large, but was also very insufficiently staffed. He thought they naturally expected the Lord Advocate to give them some reason for this policy of abandoning small prisons, well staffed and well equipped, and of concentrating and huddling the whole criminal population, practically, of Scotland, in this one great prison at Glasgow. He also desired to draw attention to a special grievance experienced by the chaplains and medical officers of prisons in Scotland. The Scotch medical officer and the Scotch chaplain got practically about £100 a year less than his English brethren. Was it because Scotch prisoners were more impressionable to religious influences and had a hardier constitution than English prisoners? One or two very important explanations had been offered by English Members on the Treasury Bench. He hoped the answer of the able Scotchman now in charge of Scotch prisons would be more satisfactory.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire) said the hon. Member for Perth was under a misapprehension if he thought that the general policy as to prisons in Scotland was a matter of modern development. As he was aware, the general policy as to prisons took a new departure in 1877, when the prisons, which before that time had been maintained out of local resources, were taken over by the State. A general scheme was formulated by the Prison Commissioners in 1877. That was modified in 1880, and practically the scheme of 1880 —with this exception, that a certain prison proposed to be built in the neighbourhood of St. Boswells was given up—was really and practically the scheme in force now. Consequently the idea of the prison of Barlinnie was not a new idea, but part of the policy started in 1880. It was perfectly true that Perth prison was very much less occupied than it used to be, but that was owing not to any change of policy inimical to Perth, but owing to the operation of certain natural results. In the first place the idea was that it was very much better, if possible, to confine prisoners who were committed for short sentences in the district in which they were committed. That avoided taking prisoners a distance in the charge of warders and making them a spectacle at railway stations. In the next place the old idea of working out penal servitude was to submit a man first to a long period of solitary confinement and then to send him to work. That system had been given up and the prisoners were now sent to work at once. He believed that was very much better for the individual than the old system. The result of that had been against Perth. Originally convicts in Scotland were sent to England, but it was found that that was not a good arrangement, and accordingly the convict prison at Peterhead was instituted. Then, when this difference of treatment ensued, it was not possible to have convicts at Perth, because there was no work for them to do. Hon. Members who knew the surroundings of Perth prison knew that they could not employ gangs of convicts there. A third cause was the decrease in the number of female convicts. Perth had always been a female convict prison. In 1872 there were 320 female convicts in Perth; at the present moment there were only 15. He thought that was a figure on which they might entirely congratulate themselves. He had said the depletion of Perth prison was owing to natural causes, but there had been certain salutary reforms in the prisons. The reason why a certain amount of money had been spent on Dundee prison was really on the same lines. Most of the prisoners convicted in Dundee were prisoners with short sentences. There had been certain salutary reforms made in the prison of Dundee which resulted in a diminution of the cell accommodation, and what had been done in Dundee was really no more than to bring up the cell accommodation to something like what it was before, and avoid the necessity of taking prisoners on short sentences from Dundee to Perth. Even as it was there was scarcely sufficient room in Dundee, because he believed the average number of prisoners was really above the number of cells. As regarded the future, there was no new prison policy, so far as he knew. There was no intention at the present moment to give up Perth as a prison. At the same time, it was quite evident there might be causes and occasions where some use might be found for a large building of that sort, and then it would be a very fair matter for consideration, whether even Perth prisoners might not be accommodated elsewhere. But he did not think that would be likely, unless there was some particular occasion for utilising Perth prison in another way. With regard to the pay of the Chaplain and medical officers, he apprehended that it was the old question of demand and supply, and, although he was anxious not to be less patriotic than the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire, he felt it was for very much the same reason that his hon. and learned Friend sitting next him (Sir R. Finlay) got a better salary than he received; not because he was conscious of any superiority—[*laughter*]—but because Englishmen were inclined to give more money to a compatriot of his own when he came to the English Bar, and, therefore, it was only fair to remunerate him at a higher rate than was paid to Scotch officials. The present scale paid by the Treasury roughly corresponded with what a man could make at other similar work in the same country, and there was no great injustice to the chaplains and medical officers when their pay was compared with what they would get in ordinary civil employment.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

BUILDING FEUS AND LEASES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Monday next till Thursday 12th May.

MOTION.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Public Health Act and Amendment Act 1890, ordered to be brought in by Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Staveley Hill, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. George Whiteley, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Ernest Spencer and Mr. Heath; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 212.]

WAYS AND MEANS [29TH APRIL].

Resolution reported.

INCOME TAX.

"That Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, at the rate of eightpence."

Resolution agreed to.—Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William Lowther, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

*MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.) moved the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) objected to the Bill as creating something approaching a monopoly, and as calculated to mislead the public. To impose fees upon persons before they were allowed to enter a trade, was to form an organisation similar to that which ruled in the profession of the lawyers, and was particularly objectionable in the case of trades. There was nothing in the Bill to prevent employers employing unfit workmen, and it was there the danger came in. Apart from these considerations, he submitted that the health of the public was better looked after by surveyors and sanitary inspectors; the creation of registered plumbers was to arouse a false sense of security.

*MR. LEES KNOWLES stated that the Bill had been before Parliament for many years. It was introduced in 1891, and was read a Second time in two Parliaments. A Select Committee had reported unanimously in favour of the principle of the Bill. The Bill had been referred to the Grand Committee on Trade, and certain parts of the Bill had been adopted in consequence of recommendations of the Grand Committee. It had been supported by upwards of 50 public bodies in the country, and it was only by bad luck that it had not been passed through the House long ago. The object of the Bill was explained in a memorandum attached to it. The chief aim was to afford additional safeguards to public health by enabling persons to select workmen who had given evidence of their qualification for plumber work. The Bill did not in any way contemplate a monopoly, and it did not interfere with the rights of non-registered plumbers; it only prevented them from representing themselves to be registered. The attempt was being made to divide competent from incompetent workmen, and the Bill simply gave a guarantee of efficiency. It was supported in all quarters of the House as well as in the country.

Dr. FARQUHARSON said it was not fair to say this was an antiquated class of legislation. All they wished to secure was that plumbers should pass through a course of study and examination, so as to place a *cachet* of superiority on their craft and give the public the general power of escaping from bad plumbing work. He supported the Bill in the interest of public health.

Bill Read a Second time.

On the Question, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc."

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) asked whether the Motion had the assent of the Government. One year this Bill was sent to the Standing Committee on Trade, and after considering it for some time, the Committee said it was so wretchedly bad that they sent it back to the House.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) said the Bill involved no Party consideration. It was just that class of Bill which ought to be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade. The Bill had been remodelled since 1894; it was not the same Bill which had been sent back, and he thought the House would do well to accept it.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc.

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday 3rd June.

RATING (PLACES OF WORSHIP AND SCHOOLS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 1st June.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.), who rose to move the Second Reading of this Bill, said that it had been introduced to remedy certain minor administrative defects in the Act of 1894. By Clause 2 of the Bill it was intended to save the time of Parish and District Councils by removing the necessity for recording the names on all divisions unless a substantial minority desired it. The next clause enabled a Parish Council to be dissolved at any time on the petition of the parish meeting, where there were less than 300 inhabitants, or 50 electors in the parish. Clause 4 dispensed with the necessity for an audit of parish accounts, where there had been no receipts or expenditure within the year. Clause 5 did away with the anomaly which prevented persons chosen as additional guardians from taking part in sanitary and highway works, where the Poor Law and District Council areas were identical. Clause 6 settled a doubt that had arisen as to the status of a Rural District Councillor who had ceased to be a Guardian.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

The House was Adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Eleven of the Clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 3rd May 1897.

The House re-assembled after the Easter Recess.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 57.]

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 58.]

NAVY AND MARINES (WILLS) ACT (1865) AMENDMENT BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 59.]

RAILWAY ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 60.]

REGULAR AND ELDERS' WIDOWS' FUNDS BILL.

Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—[No. 61.]

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (LORD BALFOUR) in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that their Lordships would have no difficulty in passing the Second Reading, as the Bill was substantially that which passed through the House of Lords last year. This year the Bill had been introduced in another place, where it had passed without Amendment. It was a Bill of only one operative clause, and its object was to enable the trustees of mineral properties to reduce mineral royalties and accept the renunciation of leases. The Act which the Bill proposed to amend already gave to the trustees of agricultural estates the power to give reductions of rent. On some mineral estates, especially in the west of Scotland, the minerals could not be worked at the present royalties, owing to the depression of trade and other circumstances. He begged to move.

Read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Friday next.

House Adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Five o'Clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Four o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 3rd May 1897.

QUESTIONS.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH SCHOOL, GRAY'S INN ROAD.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Thirsk, as a Charity Commissioner (1) whether the attention of the Charity Commissioners has been called to the case of Holy Trinity Church of England School, Gray's Inn Road (which received a building grant of £531 2s. 9d.), which was formally transferred to the School Board for London, and is now mainly let to a trading company; and (2) whether the Charity Commissioners have taken any steps to secure that the rent derived from letting the building is applied to the trusts to which the school premises are subject?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. J. GRANT LAWSON, York, N.R., Thirsk and Malton): The Charity Commissioners find, upon inquiry, that the facts are as stated in the first clause of the Question. The rent derived from letting the school building, though wholly applied to public purposes, is not applied in accordance with the exclusively educational trusts to which the building is subject. The Commissioners are taking steps to insure compliance with the trusts in future.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the inquiry held at the Mile End Vestry respecting the death of a lady travelling in an overcrowded carriage on the Great Eastern Railway on Easter Monday; and whether, in view of the coroner's remarks in regard to the danger arising from the overcrowding of railway carriages, he will consider the advisability of taking such steps as will enable the Board of Trade to deal with the question of overcrowding of carriages on the Great Eastern Railway?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): No, Sir; I do not propose to initiate legislation on the subject. I have, however, called the attention of the Company to the terms of the hon. Member's Question.

BEAM AND OTTER TRAWLING.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government has yet decided to consult the States Signatories of the North Sea Convention with a view to rendering beam and otter trawling illegal within 13 miles of the Coast of Scotland?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): No, Sir; the Government have not yet decided.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state the number of withdrawals from the Post Office Savings Bank for the year ending 31st December, 1896, and what percentage of that number consisted of transfers to third persons?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The exact number of withdrawals for the year 1896 cannot yet be given, as the accounts are not completely made up. The estimated number is 4,324,000. No separate account is kept of the number of warrants paid to third persons—which the hon. Member is presumed to mean when he speaks of "transfers"—but the number for the year 1896 is roughly estimated to be 25,000.

HERRING BRAND FEES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what sum out of the surplus of herring brand fees has been devoted, for the years 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively, for payments under guarantee to the Post Office for the extension of telegraphic communication to certain districts interested in the herring fisheries?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The amount of surplus herring brand fees devoted to the payment of telegraph guarantees in 1894, 1895, and 1896 respectively was: £925 7s. 3d., £966 0s. 11d., and £290 17s. 1d.

MUSSEL BEDS.

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardine): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, now that the Schedule of Mussel Beds has been laid upon the Table of the House, Her Majesty's Government have determined what steps they will take in the direction of legislation on this subject?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: No district Fishery Committee has yet been constituted under the Act of 1895, and until localities interested in mussel cultivation form Committees the Fishery Board can only encourage such cultivation by undertaking it themselves or protecting private enterprise. With this view the Board are negotiating with the Board of Trade for a lease of the Clyde Mussel Beds, and Her Majesty's Government propose to await the result.

AUXILIARY POSTMEN (SUNDAY DUTY).

MR. G. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any new rules have been formulated by the Post Office for increasing the rate of pay for the Sunday duty of rural auxiliary postmen; and, if so, whether any such increase of pay has been granted?

*MR. HANBURY: The question of increasing the rates of pay for the Sunday duty of rural auxiliary postmen is now under consideration, and instructions will shortly be issued.

DOG MUZZLING.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture when the Order for the muzzling of dogs will be extended over the whole country; whether any particular pattern of wire muzzle is obligatory; whether the regulation as to the quarantine of dogs at the ports has yet been issued; and what time must elapse after all the necessary precautions have been enforced before the muzzling Orders can be altogether withdrawn?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): It is not proposed to apply muzzling Orders to the whole country, but only to areas in which rabies undoubtedly exists or to which there is reason to fear that it may have been conveyed. A series of Orders for this purpose will be issued in the course of the next few days. No particular pattern of wire muzzle is compulsory, but, with a view to assist dog owners in the selection of a muzzle, specimens of a muzzle which we believe to be both efficient and humane, will be deposited at the principal police stations in districts to which muzzling Orders are applied. An Order regulating the importation of dogs will be issued almost immediately. It would be premature for me to forecast the time during which it will be necessary for muzzling Orders to be kept in force. Rabies is unfortunately a disease which may lie dormant for a considerable period after an animal has been bitten, and much will depend upon the support we receive from local authorities and dog owners generally in our efforts to stamp out the disease in this country.

MR. LOUGH: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman a question which has been sent to me by a correspondent, arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman? [*Laughter.*] It is whether a dog must have a muzzle on in taking his morning bath in a pond on Peckham Rye. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. LONG: The correspondent of the hon. Gentleman appears to be possessed of the power of divination. ["Hear!" *and laughter.*] That being so, I should think that he could have answered his own question. ["Hear!" *and laughter.*] The question depends upon the place where the dog takes his morning bath.

MR. LOUGH: The right hon. Gentleman is in error. I particularly mentioned Peckham Rye as the place.

*MR. LONG: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I did not hear him mention Peckham Rye. But the hon. Member did not say whether the pond was in public or private grounds.

MR. LOUGH: It is in public grounds.

*MR. LONG: Then the dog must wear his muzzle. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

POST OFFICE EXTENSIONS (SCOTLAND).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the people of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland experience great difficulty in providing guarantees for telegraph extensions when, under Treasury Rules, it becomes the duty of the Post Office to demand such guarantees; and whether he will endeavour to induce the Treasury to relax the rules in regard to telegraph extensions so far, at least, as the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are concerned?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is aware that in some parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland the people have experienced great difficulty in providing guarantees for telegraph extensions, and he hopes that this difficulty will be removed by the alteration in the system of guarantees which was announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in connection with the Budget.

BOTTLING BEER.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the folding of newspapers is, like the bottling of beer, such a process as to constitute any premises in which the same is carried on a factory or workshop within the meaning of the Factory and Workshops Acts 1878 to 1895?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The Question in both cases turns, I think, on whether the process has for its main object the adaptation of the article for sale or its more convenient conveyance.

The bottling of beer has been considered to have as its object the first of these alternatives; the folding of newspapers the second. The place, consequently, where the latter occupation is carried on is not held to be within the Acts. The point is by no means clear, but I do not see my way to altering the policy of my predecessors.

JUVENILE PRISONERS.

Mr. J. M. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Commissioners have lately had under consideration the treatment of juvenile prisoners awaiting trial or on remand; and whether he can state what modifications, if any, in the existing practice have been or are likely to be made in this regard?

*Sir **MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY**: Yes, Sir; the Prison Commissioners have been considering this matter, and an experiment is now being tried at Holloway by which the ordinary discipline for unconvicted prisoners is mitigated in the case of those that are under 16. The modifications are, briefly, that the cell doors are left open, under, of course, proper supervision; more time is allowed for exercise, and the exercise itself is more varied; special arrangements are also made for their instruction and generally for giving them occupation. I hope that it will be found possible very shortly to extend these modifications to other prisons also; at all events, the experience that will be gained will be valuable in framing rules for dealing generally with the matter.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will favourably entertain the suggestion that a certain number of seats on the space in front of the National Gallery, or some other suitable site, be reserved for the official representatives of the Colonies and such Members of the Colonial Legislatures as may desire to witness the Jubilee procession?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): Arrangements have already been made for allotting a certain number of seats to representatives of the Colonies, and the Colonial Office will arrange for their distribution.

Captain BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any, and if so what, regiments of Indian Native Infantry are going to be represented on the occasion of the celebration of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): On the occasion of the Jubilee in 1887 it was decided that the Indian Army as a whole should be represented by 13 officers of Native Cavalry, and it is proposed on the present occasion to follow that precedent, but to increase the number from 13 to 22. To these will be added 18 native officers representing the Imperial Service troops, which are maintained by the native States for service with the regular army in time of war. Any proposal to bring home a selection of native infantry soldiers, and at the same time to keep the numbers of the representative detachment within reasonable bounds, was held in 1887, and is held now, to be attended by almost insuperable difficulties. These difficulties I much regret, for I should have been glad to have been able to give prominence at Her Majesty's Jubilee to the Native Infantry, who have on so many occasions done such splendid service for the Empire.

PACIFIC CABLE COMMISSION.

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now in a position to make a statement in reference to the recommendations of the Pacific Cable Commission?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): The answer to the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

POST OFFICE (THURLES, CO. TIPPERARY).

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any progress has been made in the matter of providing the important town of Thurles, County Tipperary, with improved accommodation for the transaction of postal and telegraphic business?

*Mr. HANBURY: The plans referred to in my reply to the hon. Gentleman's Question on the 22nd of March have not yet been received, but efforts are being made to obtain them. Another scheme for obtaining a new office has just been suggested, and inquiries are now being made regarding it.

CHANNEL PASSENGER SERVICE (CUSTOMS EXAMINATION).

Mr. IAN MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware of the widespread discontent which exists owing to the inconvenience experienced by passengers travelling from Calais to Dover by the night boat, owing to the fact that under recent regulations registered luggage is now examined on the boat at Dover Quay with insufficient light, inadequate accommodation, and a total absence of porters to open or close the baggage; and whether, having regard to the confusion which nightly occurs, he would direct the Customs authorities at Dover to conduct such examination either at Dover Station or at the London terminus?

*Mr. HANBURY: I understand that the system now in force of examining the luggage on the boat while the mails are being landed, instead of in London, was adopted at the suggestion of the railway Company. It saves the passengers from being detained for a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes at 5.40 a.m. at the London terminus, and the Customs officers there from having to wait up all night. The inconvenience to which the hon. Member alludes probably occurred on the morning of April 21, when the steamboat Company had not made proper arrangements to meet the return of the Easter holiday passengers. The Company has given an assurance that proper precautions shall be taken in future. It may, however, be necessary at holiday times, when there is a great rush by the night steamer, to arrange the examination in London. To examine the luggage at Dover Station would involve turning the passengers out of the train there and delaying them for an indefinite period. There is no accommodation for such examination on the Admiralty Pier, and if the present system were abandoned, the only alternative would be to keep them waiting at the London terminus as under the old system, which, I am informed, is a much less popular arrangement.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether it was the fact that other railway companies bringing passengers from Paris to London provided for the examination of the luggage in London with satisfactory results?

*Mr. HANBURY: I am informed that it is the fact that the other railway companies do provide for the examination of their passengers' luggage in London, but I am told that the arrangements are not satisfactory.

POSTAL DELIVERY (GRANGE, YOUGHAL).

Mr. J. J. SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a memorial has been recently received from a number of the inhabitants of Grange sub-post-office, near Youghal, as to the want of a postal delivery through the district; whether many persons have to come or send six miles daily for their letters; and what steps the Postmaster General intends to take to afford increased postal facilities to the large and populous area concerned?

*Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has had under consideration the memorial from Grange referred to in the Question of the hon. Member, and although the circumstances do not admit of a daily delivery to the houses in question, he has had much pleasure in sanctioning an arrangement under which the letters will be delivered four days a week.

BARBED WIRE FENCES.

Mr. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if barbed wire fences are permissible along the sides of public roads; what county official is responsible in cases where such wires are allowed to be put up and maintained; and will he direct prosecutions should any such cases be brought to his notice?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): Barbed wire, if placed along a public road, is not permissible if it amounts to a nuisance. The county surveyor of a county, or city engineer, or surveyor of a borough, is, under the Act of 1893, the person empowered to take action against those responsible for placing the wire there. The Executive have no authority in the matter.

GENERAL POST OFFICE (LONDON).

Mr. CROMBIE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is true that the Post Office intends taking as a site for a new post office the Vicarage, Christ Church, Newgate Street; and whether, in view of the impracticability of finding any other site for a Vicarage within the parish, the Post Office can make any other arrangement for a site?

*Mr. HANBURY: The House used as the Vicarage for the Parish of Christ Church, Newgate Street, is provisionally scheduled amongst the properties to be taken under the powers of the Post Office Sites Bill, which is about to be introduced into Parliament, but it has not yet been definitely decided that, in the event of the Bill being passed, steps shall be taken to proceed with the acquisition of the premises. In any case, the Department would be desirous of meeting the convenience of the parish as far as possible.

HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY EXERCISES.

Mr. F. A. NEWDIGATE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that that part of Rotten Row opposite to Knightsbridge Barracks, and intended for the public to ride on, is used by the Household Cavalry for practising military exercises, and that the riding track is at times consequently blocked up by hurdles erected for the purpose of affording jumps; whether until this year the Household Cavalry quartered at Knightsbridge Barracks had the privilege of using the grass in front of the barracks for this purpose; will he explain why this privilege has recently been taken away, with the result that the regiment of Household Cavalry quartered at Knightsbridge Barracks has nowhere to practise these exercises except in the barrack square, where it is impossible to practise except under dangerous conditions, owing to inadequacy of space; whether he is aware that the performance of these exercises in that part of the park allotted to riding is a matter of danger to the public, owing to its proximity to the carriage road; and whether he will give orders that their ancient privilege of practising exercises on the grass may be restored to the Household Cavalry, so that there may be no necessity in future for taking part of the riding track for that purpose, and thereby preventing at certain times of the day its use and enjoyment by the public?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Permission has never been given, so far as I am aware, for hurdle-jumping and tent-pegging on the grass in front of the Hyde Park barracks, although such exercises may have been carried out there. In the opinion of the authorities best qualified to judge, the grass would be very rapidly destroyed were this practice to be allowed, and the Ranger has therefore permitted the Household Cavalry to use the ride for these purposes up to 7 a.m. I will, however, consult with the Ranger upon the point raised by my hon. Friend with a view to seeing whether the experiment can be tried of permitting the grass plot in question to be used, if required, after 7 a.m.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether, as the cavalry only used the Park for a few days in the year, it was not possible to allow the exercises to take place on the grass?

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the exercises had always been carried out on the grass?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS thought that last year, or the year before, the exercises were stopped in order to save the grass. He agreed that there was no reason why they should not be continued, subject to the general convenience of the public.

TURCO-GREEK WAR.

Mr. EDWARD MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have received any suggestion from the German Government for the punishment of Greece, or the forcing of Crete back into subjection to the Turkish Government; if so, whether he will lay the Dispatch referring to these proposals upon the Table of the House forthwith; and whether Her Majesty's Government will pledge themselves to take steps to frustrate the carrying out of any such proposals?

MR. CURZON: No such suggestion has been received, and there is no necessity for Her Majesty's Government to pledge themselves to frustrate a proposal which no one is likely to make, and which the hon. Member must excuse me for saying it is ridiculous to suggest. [*Laughter.*]

TRANSVAAL (VAAL DRIFTS).

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Papers with reference to the dispute with the Transvaal Government in regard to the closing of the drifts on the Vaal River, which are to be presented to the Cape Parliament?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I answered the same Question a few days ago. I believe it is intended to present these Papers to the Cape Parliament. If they are presented to the Cape Parliament, I shall lay them on the Table here.

SEWAGE (COVENTRY).

MR. CHARLES MURRAY (Coventry): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the long continued and dangerous delay, from various causes, attending the settlement of the sewage question in Coventry, an injunction against the Corporation being only temporarily suspended; and whether the Local Government Board will at once announce their decision upon the unopposed scheme of the Corporation, which was inquired into on the 19th of March last?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The Local Government Board have received the Report of their Inspector on the Inquiry, and the Report has been under their consideration with regard to certain points in connection with the scheme. The decision of the Board in the case will be given very shortly.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General's attention has been called to the request for a daily mail service from Derinacahara (Dunmanway, County Cork) to Coolmountain, the present delivery being only three times weekly; and if the request submitted will be complied with?

*MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General's attention does not appear to have been called to the desire for a daily post from Derinacahara to Coolmountain in lieu of the present service three days a week, but the matter shall be inquired into.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the communication that was promised to be made by the Postmaster General in favour of facilitating the acceleration of the mails in the Donoughmore district, Blarney, County Cork, has been made, and with what results; and whether, in view of the fact that widespread dissatisfaction with the existing system is expressed, a speedy reform may be made, the new light railway being utilised for the purpose?

*MR. HANBURY: Figures have been obtained in regard to the posts in the Donoughmore district, which show that no improvement of delivery at Donoughmore in the morning, or of dispatch in the afternoon, would result from the substitution of a service by railway for the existing service by road. There was a further question whether a second delivery in the day might not be afforded by means of the railway, but the number of letters that would fall into a second delivery is found to be far from sufficient to warrant the necessary cost attending the additional service.

STEAMSHIP "DARWIN."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that six firemen, who joined the steamship *Darwin* at Glasgow on 26th October, 1896, and proceeded on a voyage to Buenos Ayres, were charged by the captain with not maintaining a sufficient quantity of steam; that when the vessel arrived at Rosario the firemen were taken before H.B.M. Consul, who refused to interfere as he believed the men were doing their best; and whether he is aware that when the vessel arrived at Buenos Ayres the captain again took the firemen before H.B.M. Consul General at that port, who ordered the men to go back to their ship, which they did; and whether, shortly afterward, six policemen went on board, arrested the six firemen, and took them to a prison, where they were incarcerated for 17 days without a trial of any kind having been held; and whether it is true that the men were employed working without pay for the Harbour Authorities, and confined at nights in filthy cells; and whether he can state if H.B.M.'s Consuls abroad have power to imprison British seamen without trial before a Naval Court; and, if not, whether he will take steps to call upon the Consul at Buenos Ayres to explain his conduct in this matter?

Mr. RITCHIE: I find that the attention of the Board of Trade has already been called by the hon. Member himself to the case referred to at such length in the Question. The Consul at Buenos Ayres has been requested to report fully upon all the circumstances; and, so soon as his report is received, a communication shall be sent to the hon. Member.

CROFTERS' COMMISSION (REPORT).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the forthcoming Report of the Crofters' Commission, though laid upon the Table on the 26th instant, and not yet issued to Members of this House, has been available to certain members of the Press for several days; and if he will state the source from which the Report has been obtained, and when it will be issued to Members?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: The printing of the copies necessary for circulation has taken some time, but I understand will be completed shortly. As the hon. Member is aware, the Report is available to Members in the Library, and its contents are thus communicable to the Press or others.

Mr. Havelock Wilson.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. LAMBERT asked when the Government proposed to take the Necessitous Board Schools Bill?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot give a definite answer. I should like the hon. Member to put down the Question for to-morrow. I do not think that the Committee stage will be a long stage.

WALLACE BEQUEST.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now able to state to the House the probable arrangements for the housing of the Wallace Bequest; whether there is anything in the terms of the Will preventing the Art treasures in Hertford House being allowed to remain there permanently; and whether, in the event of the Government deciding to remove them to Trafalgar Square, consideration will be given to the urgent need for extension of the National Gallery buildings, so as to secure the proper display of the pictures which they contain?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: In answer to the hon. Member I have to say that a Committee has been appointed to inquire into and report on the whole subject in connection with the Wallace Bequest The terms of the reference are as follows:—

> "Where, in what manner, and at what probable cost, provision may be best made for housing and exhibiting the art collection recently bequeathed to the nation by Lady Wallace, and to make any recommendations which may seem fit to them as to the constitution of a Trust in which this collection may be vested."

The members of the Committee are:—

Lord Lansdowne (Chairman)
Sir William Harcourt
Sir Edward Poynter
Mr. Freeman Mitford
Sir F. Mowatt
Mr. Walter Armstrong, Director of the National Gallery of Ireland
Mr. Alfred de Rothschild and
Mr. Alfred Waterhouse.

Dr. FARQUHARSON asked whether the Hertford collection would be open to the public during the time it remained at Hertford House?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I should think it will be impossible to open the collection until the arrangements have been made for its public exhibition.

FOREIGN CODES OF LAW.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that a department of the French Government, namely, le Ministère de la Justice, is publishing at the public charge a series of French translations of the principal Foreign Codes of Law; and whether, following the precedent of the State Trials Committee, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury would be disposed favourably to regard a proposal for the appointment of a Committee charged with the duty of superintending the preparation of English translations of famous Foreign Codes, such as the Penal Code of Italy, 1890?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I will consult the Home Secretary on the subject of this Question; but my own impression is that it will be better, at all events, to wait and see what is the result of the French translation of the Codes, and what value it is to students. It may well be that the Italian Code is more available for English students than the French translation.

POLICE APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tomorrow till Tuesday 11th May.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WORKMEN (COMPENSATION FOR ACCIDENTS) BILL.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool), in asking for leave to introduce "a Bill to amend the law with respect to compensation to workmen for accidental injuries suffered in the course of their employment," said: I do not think the House will expect me to attempt to enter into the history of this difficult and intricate question. I think those who remember the discussion that took place in 1893 will recall the fact that my predecessor gave on that occasion a most clear explanation of the state of the law and the attempts which had been made to alter it. Neither shall I endeavour to prove to the House that the Government is justified in dealing with this extremely difficult problem. Looking to the Debates of the last few years, and to all the controversies which have taken place with respect to labour questions throughout the country, there is, I think, sufficient justification for any Government trying to do their best to solve the problem. ["Hear, hear!"] I shall, therefore, assume, without further argument, that the question of compensation for accidents to workmen in some form or other is one with which Parliament ought to deal, and if I needed further argument I should say that the present advisers of Her Majesty are pledged to deal with it; and, in accordance with the promises made to the country, they believe it to be right and proper that they should introduce this Measure now. In 1893 my predecessor introduced a Bill whose object was, by making employers responsible for accidents which were due to their own negligence, or to the negligence of those employed by them, to give a strong incentive to the taking of proper precautions for securing safety in dangerous industries. I think that is not an unfair definition of the object which the right hon. Gentleman had in view. The effect of that Bill would, I think, have been to put the workman in the same position as the stranger. It would have restored the workman to the same rights under the common law which a stranger to the employer possesses, and which he enjoyed previous to the decision of the Law Courts that established the doctrine of common employment; that is to say, it would have given every workman in this country—and the definition of "workman" was wide and all-embracing—the same right of action which every stranger had. That right of action would have been for unlimited compensation. Against those proposals it was argued that it was unfair to make employers legally responsible when they were not morally responsible, and it was said that they could not be morally responsible for these accidents when they had no power over the persons who had caused the accidents and who were not under their control. It was said, further, that those proposals did not remove the difficulty of proving negligence, and those who are familiar with the character of these accidents will, I think, be prepared to admit that one of the great difficulties which have attended this subject in its practical operation is the difficulty of proving negligence. Therefore it was argued that the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman, instead of doing anything in the direction of diminishing the chances of litigation, would work in the opposite direction, and that the result of putting such a large and onerous liability upon the employers of this country would be that they would inevitably use every endeavour to litigate themselves out of such liability. Further, there was the difficulty of contributory negligence, and a subject that is more likely to lead to litigation and to excite the activity of lawyers can hardly be imagined. Another argument that was used with great force against the proposals of my right hon. Friend was that they would not extend to the vast majority of the accidents which, unfortunately, occur in this country. ["Hear, hear!"] It was felt that, although the workmen and those who represent them say that they do not so much desire compensation or payment for loss of life or limb as they desire protection, it was reasonable that there should be some attempt on the part of the Legislature of this country to meet these accidents by some compensation. ["Hear, hear!"] I shall not endeavour to fix the number of the accidents which were altogether omitted from the operation of my right hon. Friend's proposals. They have been variously estimated, but never at less than 40 or 50 per cent., and my right hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool, who is responsible for a Bill based on the principle of general compensation, put the number at 80 per cent. But, whatever the number may be, surely the subject ought to be taken into consideration by the House. ["Hear, hear!"] The principle of the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman opposite was accepted in this House by both sides, and also by the House of Lords, and if the Measure was ultimately wrecked after laborious progress through the Grand Committee, it was lost because the right hon. Gentleman and his friends refused to agree to the Amendment, which was inserted in another place, and which gave the power of contracting out, or, as I would prefer to put it, gave the power to employers and employed to contract themselves under proper safeguards into a better position. ["Hear, hear!"] When that Bill was before the House a very important Amendment was moved by my right hon. Friend the present Secretary of State for the Colonies, who proposed that it would be advantageous to provide for all accidents by making compensation a trade expense; but, if I remember rightly, that Amendment was not carried to a division. It was argued that the workman should not only be put into the same position as the stranger, but, if anything, into a better position. It was argued that the serious results of accidents could not be held to be adequately met by merely giving the workman a right of action in respect of the negligence of an employer or of any person for whom he was responsible, and it was felt that the workman or his representatives ought to have a right to compensation at the expense, not of the rates or of public charity, but of the industry in which he was engaged. When it was said that by imposing such a burden upon the industries of this country you would render competition with foreign trade still more difficult than it is at the present time, it was shown that such a law of industrial compensation is well-nigh common to the whole of the Continent, and is in force in most of those countries with which we enter into any severe competition. It was pointed out also that such a scheme, providing for general compensation, if it accurately defined the liabilities of one side and the other, and if it provided a simple and inexpensive remedy, would prevent litigation. It would prevent uncertainty, and the parties and their representatives would know what their rights were. Some words used by my right hon. Friend opposite seemed to indicate that he at any rate would be prepared to approve such a solution of this difficulty, but it was said by others, and the labour representatives principally, that such a law would lead to general insurance, and that insurance, if general, leads to diminished responsibility on the part of the owners, and must do away with those incentives to supplying adequate protection which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had in view when he introduced his Bill in 1893. I am prepared to agree to the fullest extent with those who argue that the Legislature can properly interfere to secure the safety of those engaged in dangerous industries; but, I ask, how far is the argument sound which says that if you have insurance you undermine safety? If you passed an Act of Parliament to-morrow prohibiting persons from insuring against risks, it would be impossible to carry the Measure into practical operation. Under the Bill of my right hon. Friend opposite the liability was unlimited, and the difficulties of insurance would therefore have been much greater and the premiums much higher than they would be under a scheme of limited liability. But the absolute certainty is that under any scheme of compensation there will and must be insurance. What is the effect of insurance? With regard to inevitable accidents it of course can make no difference, but how far does insurance affect preventable accidents? When an employer is his own insurer, surely his own interest demands that he should endeavour to diminish risk and to prevent accidents; and if the result of a scheme of insurance is to throw more business upon insurance societies, they, too, will have great reason to see that proper precautions are taken for safety, and if proper precautions are not taken the premiums will rise. Insurance companies will not deal on the same reasonable terms with employers who do not adopt proper precautions as they will with those who do their best to protect life in the industries in which they are engaged. It is, therefore, hardly conceivable that under a system of universal liability and insurance employers will not take every care to protect their workmen. But, after all, the true means of protection against the improper conduct of dangerous trades does not lie in civil liability, but in maintaining a proper criminal liability under the Acts which exist; and if those Acts are not sufficient and adequate for the purpose they should be strengthened. At all events, we have in this country many Acts which are expressly provided for the purpose of securing that, apart from any civil liabilities, the State should see—and it does see—through its inspectors that proper precautions are taken for the protection of life and limb by everybody who employs men in dangerous industries. Now, Sir, one word as to German experience. I dare say it will be said that there has been an increase of accidents under the German system, which is almost universal, and applies to almost all industries now; but I think it requires a somewhat close examination of the official figures to see what the effect really has been. So far as I am able to understand them, if there has been any increase of accidents under the system of general insurance, it appears to have been because there has been a much more accurate notification of accidents and a much closer record of what has happened in the various industries; and, secondly, there has been, in the case of serious accidents, particularly those causing death, instead of an increase, a decided decrease. That was, in short, the state of affairs on the one side and on the other when the Government came to consider this problem. It seemed to us that we had two alternatives before us—one the alternative of adopting something like the provision of my right hon. Friend opposite, adding to it, as we were pledged to do, the power of contracting out. [*Cheers.*] The other alternative we had was to propose a scheme of general compensation, under proper safeguards and necessary limitations, and apply it to industries to which it would appear, in the first instance, it could properly be applied. It will be gathered from what I have said to the House that in the proposals we are about to submit to Parliament we have chosen the latter course. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill we propose does not explicitly or directly deal at all with the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. It leaves that Act entirely untouched. It proceeds on the principle which I will venture to quote from the words used by my right hon. Friend in 1893, that—

> "when a person, on his own responsibility and for his own profit, sets in motion agencies which create risks for others, he ought to be civilly responsible for the consequences of what he does."

In our Bill we accept the principles laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, and we accordingly propose in the first clause that—

> "if in any employment to which this Act applies, personal injury by accident, arising out of and in the course of employment, is caused to a workman, his employer shall be liable to pay compensation in accordance with the first schedule of this Act."

The first schedule provides that when death results from the injury, if the workman leaves dependants, the amount of compensation shall be a sum equal to his earnings during the previous three years, or a sum of £150, whichever of those sums is the larger, but not exceeding in any case £300, provided that any weekly payments made under the Act shall be deducted from such sum. And in case of incapacity for work, a weekly payment during incapacity, after the second week, not exceeding 50 per cent. of his weekly earnings at the time of the accident, such weekly payment not to exceed £1.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): What happens in the case of permanent incapacity?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The words are "during incapacity."

*SIR C. DILKE: It is larger than in death.

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I think the right hon. Baronet had better wait until he sees the Bill. I believe there would be no difference of opinion that, in adopting this principle, a limit should be adopted with it, and, on the whole, it is likely that the limit we propose is a safe and reasonable one. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill goes on to say that if the injury was caused by the wilful or wrongful act or default of the employer or some other person for whose act or default the employer was responsible, he should be liable to be sued under the old Act, but not liable to pay compensation both independently of and also under this Bill. Now I come to the question how these circumstances are to be determined. We propose that, if any question arises as to whether the employment is one to which this Act applies, or whether the injury is caused under the circumstances mentioned in the last clause of the Bill which I have read, or as to the liability for compensation under this Act or the amount or duration of the compensation, the question, if not settled by agreement, shall, subject to the provisions of the first schedule of this Act, be settled by arbitration in accordance with the second schedule. Our hope is, with regard to arbitration, that committees will be established between employers and men to settle the question; but, if there is no committee and the parties do not agree, the matter shall be settled by a suitable arbitrator appointed by the parties, or, in the absence of agreement, by the County Court Judge or by an arbitrator appointed in another way, but in that case we should not throw any of the costs on the parties. It is proposed that the Treasury should make regulations for the payment of the arbitrator. I come now to a clause in the Bill which, of course, I am aware is controversial, even if the others are not. It is no doubt more difficult to deal with the subject of contracting out when you offer to the workmen of this country a much more liberal scheme of compensation than was proposed in the Bill of my right hon. Friend; and it is, of course, more difficult in the circumstances to give that incentive either to employers or employed which has been the main motive that has originated those mutual societies we desire, so far as we can, to protect. At the same time I may say I have some reason to think that many of the objections entertained conscientiously by hon. Gentlemen opposite to the principle of contracting out will not be so formidable, and that the principle will not seem to them so injurious to the interests of the workmen when we have established the fact that the workman is entitled under the law to the privileges I have shortly indicated, and when we provide that in no circumstances whatever shall he be able to deprive himself of them. ["Hear, hear!"] We believe in the same principles which we asserted when in Opposition, the same line of argument which was pursued at the general election, the same pledges given by many Gentlemen on this side of the House with regard to freedom of contract. We believe it is better to provide by mutual agreement than by law. [*Cheers.*] We think that, if both parties can come to an agreement to settle their own differences or arrange their own wants in their own way, it is a more satisfactory way of doing it than the most liberal legislation Parliament can provide. Of course we cannot but be aware that in the principal enacting clause of this Bill we adopt the general principles of compensation—limited, it is true; but, when we have provided that, there are possibly not the same inducements to provide against accidents that there were under the Bill of my right hon. Friend. The adoption of that principle may involve some reconstruction of the existing societies, but we desire to give them room to provide further advantages of any kind it may be in their power to provide, and we propose a clause to the effect that, if the Registrar of Friendly Societies certifies that any scheme of compensation or insurance for workmen is, on the whole, not less favourable to the workman than the provisions of this Bill, the employer may, until the certificate is revoked, contract with any workman that the provisions of the scheme shall be substituted for the provisions of the Bill, and that the employer shall be liable only under the scheme. That clause is intended to provide a guarantee that, if any schemes of this kind are entered into or continued, they shall offer the same advantages to the workman as are offered by the Bill. Then there are other considerations which will come in to avoid litigation. I ought to have said, in reference to the schedule, that this Bill does not give any compensation for injuries which do not disable workmen for a period of two weeks. Now I come to the question as to what industries this Bill should apply to. From what I have said the House will realise that in our opinion it is not possible that the Bill can apply to all the industries of the country. We propose that the Bill shall apply to what I may call the more dangerous industries of the country, or, speaking roughly, to those industries for which Parliament has provided special protection. The words of the Bill are:—

> "This Act shall apply only to employment on, in, or about a railway, factory, mine, quarry, or engineering work."

The definition of railway follows the known definition of the Railway Act of 1871, and the definition of factory follows the Factory and Workshops Acts of 1878 to 1891, and it also includes—

> "any dock, wharf, quay, or warehouse to which any provision of the Factory Acts is applied by the Factory and Workshops Act of 1895."

MR. H. H. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): Does it include workshops?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, it does not include workshops. Mines, of course, are defined by the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887. Engineering work means—

> "any work of construction on a railroad, harbour, dock, canal, or sewer, and includes any building or other work on which machinery driven by steam, water, or other mechanical power is used for the purpose of the construction thereof."

MR. R. J. PRICE (Norfolk, E.): What include workshops?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It means a large building in which dangerous work is done.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): Does it include seamen?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It does not apply to seamen.

MR. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): Does it apply to domestic servants?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, certainly not. We do not propose any scheme of general insurance. ["Hear, hear!"] The House is probably familiar with the state of the law in Germany, Austria, and various other Continental countries; they know that in Germany, at all events, there is an extremely elaborate system, one which is utterly foreign to this country. ["Hear, hear!"] We believe that, as to a large number of the industries of this country, employers are, and will be, their own insurers. We believe that insurance has been a growing custom, and we believe that the obligation which will be thrown upon employers under this Bill will be adequately and efficiently met by insurance societies. The cost of management in Germany is one-fifth of the total compensation paid in respect of the total industries of the country, and one-tenth of the total compensation in the case of mines. That is a cost which we in this country could not face with equanimity. ["Hear, hear!"] It is most difficult to compute what will be the cost of insurance or the amount of liability upon the owners, and I shall, no doubt, be told that the burden which will be imposed upon the industries to which the Bill applies will be prohibitive. I do not think so. I think that those countries with which we compete are equally burdened, and, after the closest examination of such data as we have, I am perfectly satisfied that the cost of such insurance would be very much less than we have been led to expect. I have done my best to work out the figures in regard to mining, and I think that is an industry in respect of which the expenses are likely to be larger than those in respect of any other industry. I have taken the German official figures, and, allowing for all the difference of circumstances and conditions between Germany and this country, I have tried to see what would be the cost as regards compensation in the mining industry if the proposals contained in this Bill had been the law in Germany. I do not say it is anything more than a rough computation, but I have arrived at this result—that the percentage of compensation to wages would be 1 per cent. I have also endeavoured to apply, so far as I can, the proposals of the Bill to the mining industry of Great Britain, and it is rather significant that the figures work out almost absolutely the same—1 per cent. within one or two points of decimal. Those who are familiar with the question will know that the liabilities and risks in factories are about one-quarter of those in mines. I should like to remind the House that, as regards mines, against the 1 percentage of compensation to wages you have to put the value of the present liability under the Act of 1880, and also what I may call the moral claims and demands which are not resisted by large firms of employers who, without any legal compulsion, feel themselves constrained, in the natural course of their business, to expend large sums of money to compensate for accidents. We have to remember that we are not now considering the proposal whether the law should remain as it is, but that we are considering this alternative as against another one, and the other alternative would be some proposal like that made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite—namely, the abolition of common employment. I do not attempt to estimate exactly the amount of that liability; but when you add all those contingencies together which it is fair to take into calculation against the total liability which would be imposed under this Bill, you have got a very large diminution of that 1 per cent.—probably more than one half. I trust and hope that these proposals will do a great deal to diminish litigation. [*Cheers.*] The uncertain state of the law, with its undefined liabilities, offers great temptations to go to law, and we have felt that that is not beneficial either to employers or to employed, and that if we could propose a Measure which showed clearly what we thought is a fair liability on the employer it would be likely to cause a great diminution of the expenses hitherto incurred chiefly for the legal profession.

MR. J. SAMUEL (Stockton): Is it proposed to ask the workman to contribute towards this fund?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, Sir; I have said that the cost is thrown entirely upon the trade. I hope and believe it will be found that the charge will not be a heavy one, or one which can be described as an unreasonable burden upon the industry. Having had the advantage of seeing some figures representing the operations of many of the liberal firms in this country who pay compensation very much upon the scale proposed by this Bill, I may say the cost works out in the most startling way very approximately to the figures I have with regard to mining and manufacturing industries. We admit that the Bill embodies a new principle. It is a new departure, and I can quite imagine that there will be some criticism not only upon the principle, but upon the details. The House has first got to settle the question—Is this principle sound, or is it not? I venture to think, if you look at what is going on elsewhere not less than at the growth of public opinion in this country, and at what has passed in Parliament itself, you will see that there is a growing feeling that it is proper, in the sense of the words of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, to make trades responsible for the risks which they create. Well, then, is its application fair and reasonable? That is, of course, a matter for argument; I am not urging, and the Government do not pretend, that the Bill is complete or final. It is a tentative Measure; and a Bill which does require consideration. The Bill fixes the liability at not more than that which is voluntarily incurred by many of the largest and best firms of this country; it is defined and limited so that both parties may know where they stand; it provides an inexpensive method of settling questions that must arise; and if it be true that legislation of this kind ought to aim at being simple, immediate, and effective, this Bill has been conceived with that object. We desire that it should avoid litigation, and that it should give the workmen of this country the right to compensation for those accidents which unfortunately must occur in the course of their industry, and we believe that we can do so without inflicting an unjust burden on the employers.

*SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): Irrespective of contributory negligence?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Irrespective of contributory negligence. We altogether leave that out; we do not propose to make contributory negligence a defence as regards compensation. ["Hear, hear!"] I hope I have made the Bill sufficiently clear—at all events, I have endeavoured to do so—and, in the belief that it is an honest attempt to deal with a difficult question, I commend it to the impartial consideration of the House. [*Cheers.*]

MR. ASQUITH: I am sure I am only expressing the general sense of the House when I say that we are greatly indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for the extremely lucid and comprehensive statement which he has given us, both of the principles upon which the Bill is founded and of the detailed provisions by which it is proposed to give these principles effect. I have no quarrel to make with the historical account which the right hon. Gentleman has given of the state of this question during recent years, and of the stage it had reached when the present Government accepted office. Nor is he wrong in saying that, so far as I myself am concerned, and I believe I can speak for a very large number of my hon. Friends who sit around me, we have never expressed, and, indeed, have never entertained, any objection in point of principle to a Measure for what is called universal compensation. On the contrary, I have myself on many occasions said—expressing, I believe, an opinion that is as widely diffused on this side of the House as it is upon the other—that, if it were possible and practicable to do so, there ought to be some provision in the law of this country such as there is in the law of some foreign countries, enabling a workman who is injured through no fault of his own and through no fault of his employer, to receive—I will not say compensation, for compensation in these cases is an inadequate and often an ironical term; but to receive, at any rate, some solatium for the injury he has suffered in carrying on his operations as a soldier in the army of industry. [*Cheers.*] But what I have always said is that, excellent as that principle is, and important as it is, if we can arrive at a means of doing so, to give it legislative recognition and effect, there are some things which are more important still. First and foremost, there is the prevention of accidents, rather than compensation. [*Cheers.*] I have never pretended that the legislation for which the late Government was responsible would have been final, but we urged it upon the country because we believed it would provide not, indeed, an adequate or infallible but a large and additional safeguard to the lives and limbs of persons who were exposed to industrial dangers, and in approaching the consideration of any new scheme for dealing with this question, the first inquiry which ought to be made is—What effect will it have, not in increasing the amount of the fund to be distributed by way of compensation to the workman injured, but in reducing the risks of trade and in diminishing the number of injured workmen who have to claim compensation? [*Cheers.*] We have always said that the great grievance and the first grievance of the working classes of this country in this respect was to be found in the existence of the doctrine of common employment—a doctrine with which this Bill makes no attempt to deal. The doctrine of common employment was invented by the Bench, and it established a fictitious—and I venture to say fantastic—distinction between the posiof workmen and third persons as regards the liability of employers. If a third person is injured by the act of my servant, he can recover damages from me to the utmost extent of the injury; but if the person who is injured happens also to be in my employment he can recover nothing at all, although it might be supposed that I was under a greater *primâ facie* obligation to the man in my employment than to a perfect stranger. Such, however, has been the law for nearly 60 years, and it is that condition of the law, not founded upon ancient precedent, never sanctioned by the Legislature, which has been a great and, so we think, a legitimate grievance to the working classes of this country. We proposed to abolish that law, and that in future a workman should be in as favourable a position face to face with his employer if he sustained damage through another person in that employer's service as if he were a stranger. This Bill does not do that; the law of common employment remains, after this Bill becomes law, in the same position as now. Let me point out that as regards our proposal, be it good or bad, it proposed to deal with all the industries of the country impartially and alike. This Bill, for the first time, so far as I know, in any legislation dealing with the subject—I know the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 was subject to certain exceptions—deals only with selected industries. It introduces a new principle of discrimination—for which I have not heard any justification whatsoever—according to which the legal rights of the workman will be determined, not by the circumstances in which he sustains his injury, not upon the extent of the injury which he sustains, but by whether or not he belongs to a particular category of employment. It is all very well to say that these industries which the right hon. Gentleman mentioned are industries in which the average of accidents is highest. What consolation is that to a man who sustains equally grave and serious injury in a trade in which the percentage of accidents is lower? [*Cheers.*] Let the House remember that among the classes of labourers and artisans who are entirely excluded from the benefits of this Bill are the whole of our merchant seamen—["hear, hear!"]—all the agricultural labourers, all persons engaged in building operations, unless there happens to be steam power employed, and, lastly, what I regard as the most serious and most illegitimate exception of all, all men, women, and children engaged in our workshops, some of whom, I venture to say, are exposed to dangers quite as real and constant in their character, and even more pernicious in their consequences, than persons engaged in mines and factories. When the House realises that the whole of that large regiment of our industrial army are undoubtedly left out in the cold, I think they will see that the claim put forward by the right hon. Gentleman that this was an extraordinarily generous Measure is one which, at any rate, requires very close examination and scrutiny. My first observation, then, on the Bill is this—it does not do what all legislation of that kind, in our opinion, ought in the first instance to do—it does not abolish the doctrine of common employment, and even in respect of the benefits it does confer it restricts them within a comparatively narrow area of the industrial field. Before I pass from that point to another, I should like to make one observation which perhaps ought to take the form of a question. The right hon. Gentleman told us that it leaves the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 entirely untouched, and when a workman sustains injury from the wilful and wrongful act of the employer, or some person for whom the employer is responsible, he will have his choice of remedies. That is to say, he will either pursue the employer by such remedies as the present state of the law places at his disposal, or he may claim compensation if he belongs to one of the selected industries under the provisions of this Bill. The House will see, therefore, that the alternative which is given to the workman is one which does not place him in any better position than that in which he stands at present. If he chooses, thinking he will get more—and there are a very large number of cases in which he could get a great deal more than is provided under the schedule of compensation in this Bill—if he thinks he will get a larger measure of compensation by pursuing the ordinary legal remedies, then the Bill does not improve his legal position at all. He is still liable to be met by the doctrine of common employment. He is still liable to be enmeshed and entrapped in that elaborate series of pitfalls which are provided by the Employers' Liability Act of 1880; and the simplification of that Measure, for which all parties in the State have been crying out for a dozen years, which was indeed attempted by the Conservative Government of 1886, and the abolition of many of the technicalities with which it abounds, are abandoned by the author of the present Bill, and the law is left in its present unsatisfactory position. I pass now to another point. I said at the outset that we have always regarded prevention as a far more important object in legislation of this kind than compensation. How are you going to secure prevention? How are you going, under the provisions of this Bill, to add to the safeguards against the occurrence of accidents? The right hon. Gentleman has told us that is to be left to the operation, not of the civil, but of the criminal, law. I assume that the inspectors under the Mines Act and the Factory and Workshops Act are supposed by the Government to be an efficient and sufficient protection to the working classes of this country against the negligence of their employers. [*Cries of* "No."] Well, but the Bill gives them no other protection.

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: On that point I said that I thought the relegating of the question to insurance did not undermine safety. But the right hon. Gentleman made no more provisions in his Bill than are in this. The employer has got as much liability under this Bill as he had under that of the right hon. Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. ASQUITH: The difference is this—that in our Bill, if you could bring home to the employer that either he or anyone in his employment had been guilty of negligence which caused the accident, there was an unlimited liability on the part of the employer to make good the injury sustained. We said that the existence of such a liability for the first time placed upon the employer by the law would operate as an incentive to his mind to make him take additional precautions, which there is no reason at present he should take. We may have been right or wrong in that, but the right hon. Gentleman is not entitled to say that our proposal was the same as his. This Bill does not give the employer any additional incentive to take precautions. [An hon. Member: "It increases his liabilities."] It increases his liabilities by making him liable for accidents which no human care or skill could avoid, but as regards accidents due to human negligence it places the employer in exactly the same position of liability as though they were not due to negligence at all. It may be a very excellent thing—I think it is a very good thing—to give the workman the right to compensation under all circumstances if you can work it out. But how that could be said to increase the incentive to the employer to take precautions I am unable to comprehend. It is quite true that when a man is injured it does not matter to him a bit from the point of view of compensation whether he is injured by the negligence of his employer or by what lawyers call the act of God. The amount of injury which he sustains is exactly the same, and the amount of compensation to be put into his pocket ought to be exactly the same. But when you are looking at it from the point of view of the community and the working classes at large, when you are seeking by your legislation to establish some additional incentive to make employers avoid negligence, it makes all the difference in the world, and I think employers both on the grounds of policy and justice ought to be made to incur as large a measure of liability in the one case as in the other. To leave that measure of liability to be enforced by the criminal law amounts to providing no additional safeguard at all. ["Hear, hear!"] I will not say anything as to details, because it would be better to have the Bill before us when we criticise matters of mere detail. I will not say anything, therefore, by way of minute criticism in regard to the scale of compensation except to say that the maximum compensation for any injury short of death is the weekly payment of £1; and it is quite obvious that compensation recoverable by proceedings under this Bill will and must in a very large number of cases be very considerably less than the compensation which the workman would receive if he enforced the ordinary legal remedies, provided the legal remedies were enlarged in the way suggested by our Bill. Then, Sir, I come to a point which is one more of principle than of detail—the question of contracting out. The right hon. Gentleman says it is better to provide compensation by mutual agreement than by law—[*Ministerial cheers*]—for matters of this kind. So it is; I do not think there is any doubt about that anywhere; and in the whole controversy about contracting out, I may remind the House, our position, or my position, at all events, has always been uniformly and consistently this—that the prohibition of contracting out would not have, and ought not to have, any influence whatever on mutual beneficial arrangements between master and men. That is a controversial question—["hear, hear!"]—which I am prepared to discuss when necessary. I only say that in regard to our position, in order not to let it be supposed that I accept the alternative put forward by the right hon. Gentleman that I am an enemy of mutual agreement. Let me point out that on neither side of the House is there any advocate of free contract in this matter. We are not advocates of free contract, because we think if the law chooses to give certain rights and obligations in the interest of the community it ought not to be in the power of individuals by private arrangement among themselves to lower the standard of protection which the law intends in the interest of all. But neither are the Government opposite, or their followers, disciples of free contract. Would it be possible for me under this Bill to make arrangements with my employés to contract myself out of the scope of the Bill? Not at all. I have got to send the proposed arrangement to the Registrar of Friendly Societies. Is that free contract? I do not know why the Registrar of Friendly Societies has been selected for the performance of this most invidious and difficult duty, or what special qualifications he has for the task. ["Hear, hear!"] But if he, being constituted the authority in the matter, chooses to say, "I do not think your contract is a good one or a reasonable one," I am not able to make any contract at all. That may be a wise or an unwise arrangement. But let us clearly understand at the outset that is not freedom of contract; and it is because right hon. Gentlemen opposite, now that they have come to consider the question with the responsibility of office upon them, have seen that it would be impossible to allow freedom of contract without whittling away the law altogether——

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): We never proposed it in Opposition. [*Cheers.*]

MR. ASQUITH: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is referring to the Dudley Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, the history of that Amendment, which began very nearly at the point of free contract, was a history of the gradual whittling away of the principle of free contract. [An HON. MEMBER: "No!"] Yes, step by step; and that Amendment underwent as many transformations as almost any legislative proposal made in this House. I agree that this is quite in the spirit of the Dudley Amendment in its last form, but I must say that it provides a less effective means for the determination of the question. In my judgment no Government Department is really adequately equipped for the performance of this most difficult task of determining whether a contract between A and his workmen does or does not give to those workmen the same measure of benefit as the general law. I say it is far better to leave these matters in the hands of the Legislature itself. You may be perfectly certain that in 999 cases out of 1,000, if the workman has an arrangement with his employer which secures to him rights and obligations quite as beneficial to him as those which the law gives him, he would not be such a fool as to incur the expense and hazard of litigation by invoking the tribunals of the country. As to the provision of the Bill that these matters should be referred to arbitration, I am in entire sympathy with it. I think it is one of the great scandals of our law that the costs of proceedings in proportion to the results obtained should be so high. The costs and the delay, be it observed, are due to the unnecessary complexity and technicalities of the law itself. So far as it goes I am entirely in favour of the principle of referring these matters to arbitration, nor have I any objection whatever to the somewhat novel proposal, with which I am in complete sympathy, that the necessary cost of tribunals of this kind should be defrayed, not by the parties, but by the State. I will not now consider the question that was entered upon by the right hon. Gentleman as to what will be the extent of the pecuniary burden which a proposal of this kind will cast on the industries of the country. All estimates, as I am sure all will agree, must at the present stage be premature, and to a large extent conjectural. I do not suppose—I never have supposed—that a system of universal compensation would impose a crushing burden upon our industries. I do think, however, that it is a complete mistake to suppose that a burden such as this will be borne entirely by the employer, and I suppose most economists would agree in that view. The right hon. Gentleman himself spoke of the burden that is to be cast upon and sustained by the trade, and the word trade of course means not merely the employer, but all the various interests which are concerned in the trade. Whether in the ultimate allocation of that burden the larger share will fall upon profits or upon wages, or whether it will be possible to transfer under existing economic conditions any appreciable portion of that burden upon the consumer in the shape of an added price of goods, are questions upon which opinions may very well differ. For my own part I have always thought, and if it becomes necessary to do so I am quite prepared for it, that a larger share of the burden under existing economic conditions will fall upon wages, and that neither in the shape of an added price to be taken from the consumer, nor a diminished profit from the employer, will workmen obtain the benefit resulting from schemes of this kind. I do not say that that is in the least degree an objection; on the contrary, if the workmen of the country with their eyes open are prepared to tax themselves for the purpose of obtaining better compensation for industrial accidents, I think they will be taking a very prudent and far-sighted course. It must not be supposed, however, that the necessary result and consequence of legislation of this kind will be that the whole burden will fall on the employer, and that the workmen will not have to pay anything. I have made simply those observations which occur to me at the moment on the Measure as it has been expounded to us by the right hon. Gentleman. It appears to me, I must say, upon the first hearing, to be deficient in some of the most important characteristics which any measure dealing with this question or series of questions ought to contain, but I need not say that we shall give it when it is printed, and in our hands a most extended, and, I hope, thoroughly impartial examination. I think there will be a desire in all parts and from both sides of the House to do anything that appears to be reasonably practicable to improve the condition and prospects of men who are unavoidably injured in the course of industrial employment. [*Cheers.*]

SIR ARTHUR FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said he was sure the Bill would be received on that side of the House with approval and satisfaction. It proceeded very largely on the lines of a Measure which it was his privilege to introduce into the House three years ago, when he had the support of his right hon. Friend the present Secretary for the Colonies. The point in the Bill to which he attached great importance was the proposal for compensation to workmen in cases of accident however they had been caused. The Bill of the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken would have brought no compensation in 75 cases out of 100, because before any compensation could be obtained by a workman he would have had to prove either that the accident arose from the neglect of his employer or of a fellow-workman. Anything that would obviate the enormous expense involved in appeals to litigation in connection with accidents was much to be commended. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had told them that this Bill did not abolish the doctrine of common employment, and was not, in his judgment, a sufficient incentive to the employer to take reasonable means for the protection of those in his employ. He demurred distinctly to those two propositions. As he understood the explanation of his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, he left the responsibility of the employer, in cases of his neglect or the neglect of those whom he placed in authority, in precisely the same position as it was in to-day, and he left to the workman the right to proceed against the employer in cases where he had been negligent. What, he asked, could be a stronger incentive to the employer to do his part in protecting the lives and limbs of his workmen than that he should be made liable to an unlimited extent in cases where he was at fault? But when they came to the question of common employment and accidents arising from the negligence of fellow-workmen, he would ask, was it possible for an employer to protect his workmen from the carelessness of their fellow-workmen? The employer was no more liable for the carelessness of workmen in his employ causing accidents to their fellow-workmen than was anyone outside the works. This Bill gave to the employer the strongest inducement which was necessary to protect the lives and limbs of his workpeople. As he understood the present proposal, any workman who had met with an accident could obtain a substantial sum in compensation without litigation, and therefore he thought this Bill was far in advance of the proposal of the right hon. Member for East Fife. Undoubtedly the fault of the Bill was the limitation of trade. He was glad to hear the Home Secretary say that this was a tentative Measure, for he could not but think that as time went on other trades must be brought within its purview. Other more or less dangerous employments were undertaken by men in the housebuilding and shipbuilding trades, by men employed on railway works, such as excavators, by stevedores, and by certain tramway employés. He had no doubt that before it left the House the scope of the Bill would be much widened so as to include many other trades not less dangerous in their character than those enumerated in the Bill. It might perhaps be wise to proceed gradually and steadily, and rather limit the number of trades to be brought within the scope of the Bill until the country is fully alive to the liability which employers will be placed under. He wished to ask his right hon. Friend whether it was contemplated that in contracting out employer and employed were both to contribute to the fund, and, if so, whether the Registrar of Friendly Societies in coming to a decision would have to take into consideration, in regard to the value of the proposal made to a workman, how much it was to cost the workman, and how much better it would be than that offered in the Bill? He did not see how the Registrar was to measure the benefits that a workman would obtain under this scheme. The compensation provided for by the Bill would not be an onerous charge on the industries of the country. There were few trades in which 1 per cent. on the annual amount of wages would not cover all cases of injury and compensationtion for accidents. One remarkable instance had come to his knowledge. In an industry employing 15,000 men and paying £1,200,000 in wages the compensation payable was not far off that offered under the Bill; yet from the accounts of the concern, which he had an opportunity of examining, the cost of compensation for accidents on the wages did not amount to more than 6s. 8d. per cent. The average accidents were no less than 12 per cent. on the number of men employed, and they varied from 1 per cent. in one industry to no less than 20 per cent. in another carried on by the same firm. Yet the cost of compensation did not average more than 6s. 8d. on the wages paid. But above and beyond compensation was the security such a Bill as this would afford to the workman and his family when the former was suffering from an accident and unable to follow his employment. The thousands of cases of distress arising from accidents to workmen through no fault of their own in which Poor Law relief had to be given would be met by the provisions of this Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington) said the House was under an obligation to the Home Secretary for the clearness and fulness with which he had placed the provisions of the Bill before them. They understood sufficient of the Bill to enable them to form some kind of judgment upon its scope and what it would effect. While it was seldom possible to come to a definite and final conclusion on a Bill upon its introduction he had listened attentively to the Home Secretary, and he felt not only considerable disappointment, but repugnance to the scheme of this Bill. On this question there were only two ways of proceeding, either on the footing of prevention or compensation. In the Debate of the Bill of 1893, the Secretary for the Colonies declared that what the workmen wanted was not compensation in the limited class of accidents at which the Bill struck, but compensation for all accidents. It was pointed out in the Debate that no pecuniary compensation that could be given would really compensate a man who had lost a limb, or a family who had lost by death their breadwinner, for that loss. He thought the House was agreed on the principle of compensation for all accidents. Yet here was a Bill which did less than nothing to prevent accidents and did what was inadequate towards cure. The object of the Bill of 1893 was the prevention of accidents and prevention only. It sought to give compensation in certain cases in which compensation was not given. But it was not professed that compensation could be adequate, complete, or could be made thoroughgoing; and the main object of the Bill was to make it unlikely that accidents should occur in places where they were likely to occur if exceptional care was not taken. The Bill of 1893 swept away the doctrine of common employment and sought to restore the workman to the position, which judge-made law had taken from him, of being as well off as a stranger before the common law. It sought to prevent the employer from contracting out of his obligation to his workmen any more than he was able to do so with regard to strangers. The provision against contracting out was not something in the interest of individual workmen or individual groups of workmen. It was pointed out on the Liberal side of the House that the provision against contracting out was essential, because the obligation to be careful was an obligation imposed not in the interests of individual workmen, but of the public generally and the community at large, and to which no exception could be made. Did Parliament provide for an employer to contract out of his criminal liability under the Factory Acts, or make any exception to the rules which our industrial legislation was making more prevalent. He admitted that the Bill of 1893 was not a complete and satisfactory remedy for the existing state of things. Personally, he was not only not opposed to compensation, but was strongly in favour of compensation under conditions. He believed that we should never get a satisfactory system of legislation for the protection of workmen until we had not only prevention, but a complete system of compensation such as obtained in Continental countries, and which it was within the competence of this Parliament to endeavour to give. But while he was strongly in favour of compensation, compensation was one thing and this Bill was another. He agreed that there were two great advantages in the Bill now before the House. One was that it applied to more accidents than the present law applied to, and the other was that it diminished litigation. A man ought to be able to get compensation for personal injuries through accidents as easily as he could obtain compensation if insured against fire. His claim ought to be paid without dispute on proof that damage had been done. But the compensation given under the Bill applied only to a certain class of workmen and a certain class of employers, and was limited in amount. The Bill would not tend to the prevention of accidents. If compensation were to be given in the form provided by the Bill there was one thing to guard against. If an employer were liable for all accidents and insured against them, provided the insurance company bore the brunt of the accidents, what would it matter to him whether there were many accidents or few? The Bill took away from him the motive to be careful, the motive which existed under the present law, under which an accident arising from negligence brought liability upon him.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: He can insure under the present law.

*MR. HALDANE: Yes, but in many cases he did not insure, whereas now he would insure constantly. The Bill applied to a larger number of accidents, and the motive to insure would be greater, and the Bill did not distinguish between accidents in which he had been negligent and those in which he had not been. That had been recognised on the Continent and elsewhere, and it had been seen that there were only two ways in which, having got a scheme of compensation, they could make it a sound one—on the basis of bringing in prevention as well as cure. A scheme of compensation ought to do two things. It ought to provide some method for securing publicity whenever an accident took place. They had that method in the case of death, but in the Bill the Government had no scheme for bringing the matter to the public notice when an accident resulted in something short of death, and showing who had or had not been negligent. He thought the scheme of the Bill was deficient in so far as it made no provision for anything of that sort, and it was deficient for something else. If they were going to have a scheme of compensation and wanted to keep up the motive to be careful, they ought to have some sort of remedy over. In Germany they had the trade brought in. They had an association of employers, and every workman injured was entitled to call for compensation from that association, and he got it at once, whether he had been negligent or not. The association had a remedy over against the employer who had been negligent; but there was no remedy over in this Bill. There was the option of bringing an action under the existing Employers' Liability Act, but that was an Act which limited the amount of compensation which could be recovered. The right hon. Gentleman's scale was more liberal. What would be the motive of the workman to resort to that? He would be harrassed and worried whilst he might not recover so much, and he could see very little motive to assert this Common Law right. He said that the Government were doing nothing by introducing this scheme to impress upon the mind of the employer the necessity and duty of being careful, and the obligation to prevent rather than to cure. It did nothing to carry out what the Secretary for the Colonies expressed as his view of what ought to be done, and what as an inseparable condition ought to accompany a scheme of compensation.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, no. The hon. and learned Gentleman misrepresented me before on this matter. I will explain what I did say. I said you were making a mistake if you thought that by the infliction of pecuniary fines you would secure any prevention; that the prevention must be dealt with in another way—namely, by effective criminal measures taken against the employer, or by such measures of protection as are given by the Factories and Mines Regulation Acts, and that if that law was now declared to be found to be beneficial I should be perfectly prepared to extend its provisions. I am in exactly the same position now. I did not make it dependent upon or connected with a totally different question, which is the question of some solatium or pecuniary consideration to people injured by unavoidable accidents.

*Mr. HALDANE said that was the very point he had been making. The right hon. Gentleman by his Amendment had proposed compensation for all accidents. They pointed out to him that in that case it would impose the sanction of employers' liability, as it was at present, that compensation was given where an employer had been negligent, and not where he had not been negligent. The right hon. Gentleman then admitted that it would be necessary to add something to the Amendment in order to apply that sanction. He quite agreed that it was in the form of effective measures, and that the right hon. Gentleman's proposal was that there should be something analogous to the sanction which existed under the factory legislation at the present time, but the point was that this compensation alone, without sanction of that kind, was insufficient for the protection of the workman. That was what was wholly absent under the Bill they were at present discussing. If this had been a Bill for giving compensation, upon the footing of prevention brought in with it for carrying out the principle in some shape or form of the German system, under which the insurers paid, and there was then the same liability over on the part of the negligent employers as there was at the present time, he should have found himself in a very different attitude towards it. But that was not the scheme, and it seemed to him that the Bill was objectionable from many points of view. It was objectionable from the point of view of the public, because it diminished the stigma which there was upon the negligent employer at the present time. He was now liable for all accidents, instead of being liable only for these. It was objectionable from the point of view of the workman, because it did not give him what it professed—namely, a complete system of compensation, and did not aim at his interests as fully as those interests ought to be protected; and it was objectionable in the third place from the point of view of the employer, because it was a tax upon industry, and he thought it would in the result be found to be a tax upon wages. It was a Bill for imposing liability on the individual employer, and the small employer who was cast in £300 damages might have a heavy liability imposed upon him in proportion to his capital.

*Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) observed that there could be no earthly doubt that the Bill did not make the practice of insurance more probable than did the opposing scheme of 1893. There could be equally no doubt the expense of that insurance under the Bill would not fall upon wages, if it fell upon wages at all, to one whit greater an extent than the scheme of 1893. He was glad to have it admitted that the Bill did considerably and substantially extend the principle of compensation to workmen for injuries received, and he should be interested to notice whether, when they came to the critical stages of the Measure, there would be found any hon. Member who would be prepared to say that because along with compensation they were not going to give the workman prevention as well (which he did not admit could be said with truth), therefore the workman should not have compensation. He confessed he found it very hard to believe that any Gentleman would be discovered so rash, and forming so incorrect an opinion of the real wishes of the working classes of this country, as would be involved in such a very mischievous contention. There was another contention he wished to combat, and that was that the scheme of 1893 was in fact a scheme of prevention. It was nothing of the kind. ["Hear, hear!"] Had it made the employer's legal liability stop at the point where his moral liability might be said to stop it would have been such a scheme, but it did not do so. It was interesting to notice that both this Bill and the Bill of 1893 left exactly where it always stood and where it ought to stand the legal as well as the moral liability of the negligent employer himself and agent. ["Hear, hear!"] What was the other reason why the scheme of 1893 was not a scheme of prevention? Not only had the employer no interest under that scheme in distinguishing between the cases in which he might be held liable for negligence, and those in which he might not, but that scheme also left him free, and probably left him under greater motives than did the present Bill to have recourse to the practice of insurance. The result was that had the scheme of 1893 been carried into law it would have given the workman compensation in the smallest number of cases with the greatest amount of friction, and in circumstances under which it was quite reasonable to say that he would always have been fighting not really against his employer, but against a fleshless, bloodless, soulless, and pitiless corporation called an insurance company, which made its gains by receiving the greatest amount of premiums, and paying the smallest amount of claims. In substitution for that they had the present scheme, and he congratulated the Government on taking a step forward, and a logical step as compared with the timid, halting, and illogical proposals of 1893. ["Hear, hear!"] If they were going to extend employers' liability beyond the cases occasioned by the employer's negligence they had better extend it to the whole area of probable risks and losses likely to be incurred. But no scheme of compensation had yet been produced which could be shown to have been also a scheme of prevention. Such was certainly not the scheme of 1893, and he ventured in the Debates of that year to point out that prevention really should be left to Measures actually preventive in their professed object, such as the preventive provisions of those statutes relating to what were called the regulated industries. He thought the Government had probably taken a prudent course in giving, in the first instance, a restricted scope to the Bill as regarded, in the first place, the industries to which the Bill applied, and in the second place, as regarded the pecuniary value of the compensation to be accorded to the injured man. Possibly it might be found in the succeeding Debates that the Government might be led to take a bolder course even than they had, and to give further extension to the number of the industries to which the Bill was to be paid. There were, no doubt, some trades describable as dangerous, to which the present Bill would not apply. Those, however, were few, and the greater number of the industries to which the Bill did not apply were not so describable. But if justification was to be sought—and the late Home Secretary argued as if no justification were to be found—for making this selected list of industries, he believed it was to be found in the French law introduced in the French Chamber in 1888, and which, he believed, became the form adopted by the Legislature—that of the simple principle of making the employer liable only in the case of dangerous industries, leaving him free to insure against his liability. The amount of compensation was matter for compromise and for reasonable consideration. He congratulated the Government on having the courage to very largely increase the liabilities of employers; to have done that in the most simple and effective way in which a statute could do; to have practically, subject only to the pecuniary limit, abolished the doctrine of common employment; and to have made the employer liable for injuries to his workmen, even though those injuries might have been inflicted by the negligence of a fellow-workman. The merit of this Bill was that it even went further, and laid even heavier liabilities on the employers, and he thought that when they took into consideration the close resemblance this Bill had to the scheme which was brought under the searching gaze of the working classes in and previous to the year 1895, and which, in some typical constituencies of working men, especially of railway working men, was one of the foremost subjects of consideration in the election of 1895—and when they bore in mind that in all those constituencies the supporters of what might be called the Dudley scheme, as distinguished from the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman's Bill of 1893, were returned to that House—the Government had not only wisely considered the principles of logic and equity, but had also paid practical consideration to the ascertained wishes of the working classes. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had distinguished very sharply—and he agreed with him—between preventive legislation and compensative legislation, whether by means of general insurance or otherwise. Speaking as one by no means likely to oppose the present Bill, he regretted that the Government had not proposed to legislate by two Measures virtually at the same time, or at all events in the same Session, with regard to those two heads of the subject. He believed they would have avoided the very widespread opposition, perhaps the mistaken opposition, which this particular Measure would meet with if they at the same time proposed a Measure for increasing the responsibility upon the other side of the question to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded. His own belief was that this Bill would meet with very violent opposition, in which he was not likely to take part, but so widespread as that it was unlikely to pass in the course of the present Session. If he was right in that belief, he hoped that whenever they came to consider it again the Government would attempt to accompany this Measure by a Measure increasing the responsibility for safety, and dealing with the other side of the question. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that there would be a better state of things as regarded insurance under this Bill than would have existed under the Bill of the late Home Secretary. It seemed to him that the state of things would be the same. At this moment there was almost universal insurance in the cotton trade of Lancashire. Therefore it would not be fair for them to deal with this Bill as if it were likely to increase insurance, inasmuch as in some of the leading trades insurance was general at the present time. The main objection to be taken to this Bill in principle, when they compared it with the German law, to which the Home Secretary made several friendly allusions, was one which struck at the whole root of the Bill, and which would lead to this Bill being attacked in Germany by those who were advocates of the German system. Those who attached most importance to the success of the German system, those who were most proud of it in Germany, had always said that the very root of that system was trade responsibility as contrasted with individual responsibility. ["Hear, hear!"] There was no trade responsibility in this Bill. The responsibility was entirely individual. What was to be the practical bearing of this individual risk? The insurance company would still conduct the litigation. The employer would still get all the ill feeling that might be aroused from the litigation, but it was the insurance company which would really conduct it. That was not so under the German system. Then, again, under the German system, the trade association had the power of inspection, of levying increased contributions and of fining. They appointed their own inspectors in addition to the factory inspectors of the Government, and undoubtedly, therefore, under the German system of trade responsibility, as against individual responsibility, they had a security for safety that they would not find within the four corners of this Bill. Then, again, in the case of bankruptcy, under this Bill, as he understood it, the workman would still suffer and would still fail to get the compensation which he ought to be awarded. That was another defect which arose out of not following the German system more completely. They could not expect, perhaps, to give on that occasion a final opinion as to their views, but he was bound to say that with regard to the contracting-out, as it had been called, if they were to have an outside authority who was to pronounce upon the sufficiency of such schemes, he did not share the views of the late Home Secretary as to the character of the particular authority proposed. If they were to have such an authority at all it did seem to him that the very best authority that could be selected was the Registrar of Friendly Societies. He was the person who at the present moment was concerned with the rules of these new societies, to see whether they were thoroughly advantageous to the men; and the reports he made to that House on all private Bills that affected the wages of the men and on funds which were formed for their benefit, showed that he was thoroughly cognisant with the working of those societies, and that he thoroughly understood what was the true advantage of the worker. The matter had been brought before him in such a manner that he was more competent than any other authority who could be named in this country. The only other point he should like to mention concerned the exclusions in the Bill. He quite admitted that there was something to be said for making the Bill only partial when the Government were making so large a new departure. At the same time some of the particular exclusions were, he thought, to be regretted. The distinction set up between the class of buildings where steam cranes were used and the class of buildings where they were not used seemed to be entirely indefensible. The building trade was one of the most dangerous in the country, and the dangers arose not so much from steam cranes as from ordinary scaffolding accidents. Of course, the use of steam cranes was extending in building operations in large towns, and more buildings would come under the Bill from year to year; but still he thought it was impossible to defend the distinction. Another exclusion which he deeply regretted was that of the merchant shipping trade, which was one of the most dangerous occupations. But, generally, he was disposed to think that there was ground for the Government attempting only to deal with the main trades first, and undoubtedly they would be dealing with the vast majority of accidents in dealing with those trades. [*Ministerial cheers.*] In Germany there were 18 millions of people who were insured, but practically out of that number only those who were employed in coal mines, factories, railways, and buildings had any accidents. About 13 millions out of those 18 millions had practically very few accidents indeed. Agriculture and forestry, employing millions of people in Germany, had almost disappeared from the lists so far as accidents were concerned. If this new departure were taken they would soon have to level up the trades excluded and make the system general.

*MR. GEOFFREY DRAGE (Derby) said that they had been working for many years to obtain reforms, but in this Measure they had obtained, not so much a reform as a partial revolution. He suggested that concurrently with the proposals now laid before the House a Bill should be introduced embodying some reforms which many of those interested in labour questions thought were urgently needed. For example, there should be a Bill embodying the abolition of the doctrine of common employment, strengthening the penalties with regard to liability, to increase the amount of compensation, the simplification of procedure, and, if necessary, the use of a State prosecutor to enforce the law, further limitations with regard to unhealthy trades, and further regulations as to dangerous trades. Those seemed to be provisions which were urgently required as to all forms of trades, and not only to those dealt with in the proposals of the Government. The proposals of the Government, he said, involved a partial revolution; it was a revolution in the direction of a system which had been introduced and enforced for several years in Germany. Some disadvantages had attended the working of that system. In the first place, there had been a remarkable increase in the number of industrial accidents in Germany. The Home Secretary said that that increase had not been a serious one. It was recognised, however, by all who had studied the literature of the subject, and it was admitted at the Milan Congress by the representatives of the German insurance offices that the increase, if not in fatal, at any rate, in the lighter forms of accident had been something enormous. It was admitted at that Congress that the working men showed increased carelessness, and, what was far more serious, an amount of negligence and malingering hitherto absent in Germany. The workman in Germany had shown no scruples in preying on the funds. Another important element to consider was the supervision by the man's comrades in the case of malingering. Under these proposals it would be nobody's business to see that a man resumed work as soon as possible. Above all, a new feature had appeared in Germany in connection with the scheme—namely, the extreme resentment manifested by the working classes at any delay or refusal in the payment of the funds to meet accidents; and this feeling of resentment would have to be guarded against in the proposals of the Government. It was generally believed that under the system prevailing in Germany the workman obtained his compensation the moment the accident took place; but, as a matter of fact, hon. Members would find that appeals were made on a gigantic scale. The appeals last year from the associations of employers to the Committees of Arbitration suggested by the Home Secretary amounted to 38,000. It was supposed that under this system, when introduced in Germany, the central office in Berlin would never require to act; but last year there were 12,000 appeals to Berlin from the local arbitration societies, 2,000 of which had been left over from the previous year. Under the German system, at any rate, there was, and probably under the present scheme there would be, all the delay and vexation which it was thought to be so desirable to avoid. As to the economic tests and the effect on wages of any scheme of this kind, he said that the greatest authorities in Germany believed that wages were reduced by such schemes. [*Cries of* "No!"] At any rate, in the long run the expense would be borne by the working classes, either as wage-earners, or as consumers, or as taxpayers. Again, it was found that employers would not subscribe to charitable purposes so liberally as before, while the large diminution of Poor Law expenses which it was expected would result had not so far taken place. A scheme of insurance of this kind would press heavily on the small employer, who was gradually being crushed out of existence. So far as Germany and Austria were concerned, no measure of social peace had been brought about. The bad feeling between employers and workmen was increasing, and it was largely due to the insurance schemes of those countries. Another objection to the scheme was that under it they were labelling men according to some special category, and it would thereafter be difficult for a workman to pass from one branch of industry to another. At later stages attempts would be made to extend the revolutionary scheme proposed in the Bill to other industries, and in view of the opposition which would certainly be aroused by the Bill when its provisions came to be understood, he again expressed the hope that the Government would introduce, concurrently, a Measure to abolish the doctrine of common employment, and effect the other much needed reform he had indicated.

Mr. W. ALLAN (Gateshead) demurred to the suggestion that insurance would necessarily tend to the reduction of wages. The question of insurance need not affect workmen's wages at all. In a scheme of insurance carried out by an employer his premiums were a charge for which he made provision when he made his contracts and fixed his prices. Speaking generally, there were two points in the Bill which deserved serious consideration, and if these were attended to the Government would deserve the gratitude of every workman in the country. In the first place the Government would be well advised to make the scheme applicable to all workers. It would be a great blunder to have only a select body of workmen deriving benefits from this insurance, and difficulties would arise in differentiating between excluded and included workmen. The classes of workmen whom the right hon. Member made provision for were workmen on railways, in mines, in factories, and in engineering works. Why was the operation of the Bill limited to them? It would not apply to men in shipbuilding yards, in forges, or in printing foundries, or to men who attended merry-go-rounds and other machines of that kind, yet accidents occasionally occurred in all these employments. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to extend the application of the Bill. The Bill was also open to criticism, because it would permit men to contract out of their claim to compensation. This Measure was practically a scheme of general compensation for four special branches of industry in this country. Why, then, put in "contracting out"? Did they intend a man to contract out of his claim to compensation? That would be absurd. Let them consider the case of a fitter or turner who was out of work, and who wanted food for his wife and children. He went to a factory and asked for employment. "Yes," the foreman said, "I will give you a job, but sign that." When the man signed he was not really a free agent; there was no mutuality of agreement, and he was signing away his wife and children's right to compensation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That could not be done under the Bill. Contracting out is only allowed under certain well-defined conditions.

MR. ALLAN said that anyhow, that was a good example of what contracting out meant at present. With regard to the insurance that was contemplated, he proposed to give a litle of his own experience. In the factory with which he was connected there was a Mutual Accident Fund, which was managed by the men themselves. From this they received 10s. a week when they met with any accidents, and in addition to this Accident Fund they might belong to any Friendly or Trade Union Society. He insured the men himself against death or accident, the premium he paid being 1s. 3d. per £100 of wages, and if a man met with a fatal accident his family received three years' wages. A great many Members seemed to think that as a result of insurance workmen would be saddled with litigation by the insurance companies. He did not share that opinion. The cases of litigation of that kind in the North of England had been very few indeed, and as a rule the insurance companies settled the matter quietly. For example, some four months ago workmen were mending the propellor of a large steamer; to the propellors two chains were attached, and one of these gave way, and striking a workman in the back killed him. The facts were reported to the insurance society and the man's wife received £200 at once, although the man had not been in his then employment for more than six months. Insurance associations did not like litigation; they were afraid that those who paid the premiums would go against them as witnesses. He believed that every employer in this country could insure his workmen for a very moderate premium. The companies knew that Government inspectors examined machinery, and that gave them security. They also ascertained for themselves that machines were well guarded, and they took care to insert in their policies a provision that all reasonable care must be taken to prevent accidents. He observed that the proposal of the Home Secretary was that a workman who was incapacitated should receive £1 a week. He wanted to know how long that payment was to continue.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: During the incapacity.

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The payment will go on for the time of his natural existence, if the man is permanently incapacitated.

MR. ALLAN thought that that was a generous provision. He felt sure that if the right hon. Gentleman would eliminate the two points to which he had drawn attention from the Bill, he would deserve the gratitude of everyone in the country. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Stockport) congratulated the Government and the Home Secretary upon the introduction of the Bill. Under the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 it was one thing to claim for injuries and a very different thing to obtain the compensation. The fact that in future contracting out would only be permitted where it improved the position of a workman as compared with that given by the Bill, disposed once for all of any quarrel in the House over that question. He still believed that there existed among the working classes a real and not a simulated desire to retain the power they possessed of contracting out. When they remembered that almost all the provisions in the proposed Bill existed with their European and American competitors, it would be a sorry matter if they, who took a pride in being the workshop of the world and the hub of the universe, lagged behind in this great matter. The Bill would give compensation for all injuries, subject to the provision that there was what he might call a close time for employers of two weeks after an injury had been inflicted. That seemed to him a rather restricted period. It seemed to him that it would be an improvement, not only for the employer but for the workman, if the period was extended to one month. The late Home Secretary had endeavoured to belittle the Bill by a comparison with his own abortive Measure, but he was sure that the workman would prefer a Bill which gave him compensation in all cases on the basis proposed by the present Measure to the chance of compensation given by the Bill of 1893. ["Hear, hear!"] He regarded as the blot on the Bill the limitation of its advantages to certain trades. ["Hear, hear!"] If the Government would extend it to all, it would be a very material advantage to all concerned. He had gone into the question of insurance very carefully, and he thought the Home Secretary had much exaggerated the cost. He had the tariffs of about 20 insurance companies, and he did not think the present rates would be more than trebled at the outside. At the present time in the cotton and textile trades the rate was 9d. per £100 of wages, and he believed a premium of about 2s. 6d. per cent. of wages would be sufficient to cover the cost under the Bill. With regard to the manner in which employers and workpeople ought to arrive at a settlement of their differences, he thought the very best method of procedure would be by the county courts, and the expense of such litigation might reasonably be made a charge either upon the locality or upon the national exchequer. He could not see how increased danger and reduced protection and safeguards would result from a scheme of general compensation. The Home Office now had plenary powers, and in addition to the Government inspectors—who were sometimes fussy to a ridiculous extent—there was no doubt that insurance companies, for their own protection, would insist upon protective measures, and would have differential rates in order to guard themselves. ["Hear, hear!"] Generally speaking, he thought they could congratulate the House upon the Bill. It reached the bed-rock on this matter, and settled once for all a very thorny point, for it would safeguard the workman in his employment, and give him full compensation for any injury which he might unfortunately sustain. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR JOSEPH PEASE thought the Bill was essentially one the House ought to see in print before they came to a judgment upon it, and he had no doubt that his right hon. Friend, before he asked for a Second Reading, would give hon. Members ample opportunity to send the Bill to their constituents, and ascertain their views upon it. Whilst he observed with great satisfaction that it was proposed to place a new safeguard on contracting out, that question was still left perfectly open so long as the scheme on which a man contracted out was equally as good for him as the provisions of the Bill. Among his constituents there was a strong feeling against contracting out. They alleged that the question for them was under what conditions would their lives and limbs be best preserved. The workmen said—and he had had many discussions with them on the subject—that there was nothing safeguarded them so much as the fact that if injury resulted to them by the carelessness of those who employed them, or those who were the representatives of the employer, they were able to bring them before the courts of justice. In his own experience of 14 or 15 years since the present Employers' Liability Act was passed, he was able to say that, although employing 5,000 or 6,000 men, they had never had but two actions threatened, and they were compromised for £7. It was the small and the poor and bad employer who required contracting out, and not the large employer. In the great coal districts of Northumberland and Durham there was no contracting out, and yet the benevolent societies were thoroughly well maintained, and the periodical audits by experts showed that they were in good and thorough working order. As to the question on whom increased charges upon industries ultimately fell, it was difficult to lay down any strict or special line, but where an employer had been working, as many hundreds and thousands had been during the last few years, without any margin of profit at all, the charge naturally fell on the wages themselves. He did not say he considered that altogether a thing to be deprecated, but this was a question to be considered seriously before the Bill passed. For his own part he believed the working-class constituencies of this country would prefer the Bill of the late Home Secretary to that now presented to the House.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps a few words of explanation may have the effect of shortening the Debate, because some of the arguments and statements to which the House has listened apply to an incorrect appreciation of the real purpose and provisions of the Bill. On the whole, I think the Government have every reason to be satisfied with the Debate so far as it has gone. I hope that when the Bill is in the hands of hon. Members it will be found even better than may appear at first sight, and that the oppositon with which it is threatened will be modified, if it does not greatly disappear. Of one thing I am perfectly certain, and that is that the great mass of the working classes of the country, when they understand what an enormous boon it is proposed to confer upon them, whatever additions they may wish to the Bill, will not desire that it should be defeated. ["Hear, hear!"] Before I go to one or two points of detail, let me say a word on one point of principle. My right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary raised a point as though it were a question between prevention and compensation. That is not the case. I venture to say that this Bill will do something for prevention, but, putting that aside for the moment, I believe the Bill may stand very well on its merits as being a Bill for compensation alone. If you consider that, under the existing state of the law, something like 12 per cent. only of accidents are in any way dealt with in the shape of compensation, the House can understand that a Bill which is going to bring in for the first time 88 per cent. more is a Measure of such importance that it may very well stand on its own bottom. [*Cheers.*] I entirely agree with what fell from my hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. Haldane), that, if it can be proved that the existing preventive arrangements are insufficient, that is a reason for additional preventive arrangements; but why I interrupted him was because, at all events, I myself have never yet been convinced that such additional precautions were urgently required. In regard to the question of prevention, we have a whole series of enactments which have been elaborated during a long course of years, and which have taken shape in the Factory Acts, the Workshops Act, the Mines Regulation Act, and in other Acts affecting the health and safety of persons engaged in industrial employments. I do not, of course, maintain that those Acts are perfect, but it is evidently more urgent in the circumstances to endeavour to pass legislation which would bring compensation for every accident whatever—those which are inevitable as well as those which are preventable—than it is to make further Amendments in an Act which has already been amended on successive occasions during the last 10 or 20 years. While agreeing that prevention is of the greatest importance, I differ entirely with my right hon. Friend opposite and others in their view that the Bill of my right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Asquith) would have been any more in the interests of prevention than our Bill. That, at all events, I absolutely deny. If you want to have greater preventive regulations you must seek for them in Amendments of the Acts now regulating these industries, and in alterations of the criminal law as applicable to the negligence of employers. I am not saying now whether that is desirable or not, but it is in that direction, and that direction alone, that you can secure any strengthening of the preventive system at present in force. [*Cheers.*] And I think it has been a fatal mistake which has been made by my right hon. Friend opposite, and which is still made—generally, however, I believe, by Gentlemen who have not been themselves connected with any industrial employment whatsoever—the mistake that you can, by punishing the employers, prevent the majority of those accidents, and that you can do so by laying on the employer a pecuniary liability. The first answer, of course, to that is that every pecuniary liability—and the greater the pecuniary liability the more this will be true—can be covered by insurance, and although, as has been pointed out, insurance companies may exercise some control, and will do so in the shape of alterations of rates in accordance with the scale of risk, yet undoubtedly the moment you have insurance you get rid of that personal feeling of liability which it has been the object of my right hon. Friend to secure. It has been said that this Bill provides for a greater number of accidents, and that therefore it is more certain insurance will be resorted to. The case is exactly the reverse, because, except in certain cases where accidents occur of a wholesale character, such as mines, I believe that with regard to all other employments it will be in the interests of the employer not to insure under our Bill, because the liability is fixed and definite, and because it will be cheaper for them to provide the insurance themselves rather than to swell the profits of an insurance company. In the case of the Bill of my right hon. Friend opposite the liability was indefinite, and the risks were so great that a wise man would not attempt to take them. But in our case, with a definite liability which in most cases will be extremely small, I do not believe there will be such general insurance as most speakers have imagined. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary spoke of liability in the case of very dangerous industries. I believe that coal mining is the most dangerous industry, and even in that case the maximum cost of the liability is not likely to exceed 1 per cent. on the wages. But when you come to the ordinary industrial manufactures and engineering employment, such as the textile manufactures of Yorkshire and Lancashire, the cost is very much less than that, and I believe it will be measured by 1s. or 2s. per cent. on the wages, and I say that not without some inquiry into the subject, because I have been favoured by large manufacturers with the whole Returns for years past of the accidents which have taken place in their works, and I have made calculations in regard to the different forms of industry, and I believe it will be found that in a well-regulated factory the cost will really be very much less than anything hitherto supposed. Now, Sir, I say that our Bill, even if it does nothing for the prevention of accidents, does as much as the Bill of my right hon. Friend opposite. He proposed to bring in as compensation an additional tenth; we propose to bring in an additional one-seventh. Whatever precaution there may be taken by the employer in bringing in one-tenth additional liability there must be in bringing in one-seventh much more effect in our Bill than in that of the right hon. Gentleman. I have never contended that a Bill of this kind would greatly affect precautions to be taken, and I believe that every good employer already voluntarily takes all the precautions that he can be called upon to take, but, when in addition you have the elaborate system of inspection which is now organised for dangerous trades, I very much doubt whether legislation can go much further. Of one thing I am certain—whereas I am disposed to be as severe as it is possible to be upon any person who can be proved to have deliberately omitted precautions which might save life or limb, I think there is great danger in making your criminal law too stringent, because then you have to deal with juries, and juries will not convict if they think the punishment is more than the offence should bear. I am bound, therefore, to warn those with whose object I entirely agree, but who think greater results can be obtained by strengthening the criminal law, not to make the law too stringent for public opinion, lest they should fail to obtain a conviction. For the prevention of criminal negligence we must look to the criminal law. On the other hand, there remains the necessity I have urged of providing some form of compensation for those who are injured really by no fault of their own. We in this Bill have dealt with that in a most liberal spirit. We have provided for those who are injured by no fault of their own, but we have gone beyond that because we have provided for those who have in the technical terms of the law contributed to the accidents from which they suffer. At first sight we may appear to have gone too far, but it must be borne in mind that, under the definition of the law, the offence of contributory negligence has been made an excuse for avoiding all liability whatever. What is contributory negligence? A workman at the end of a long day's work may handle his tools carelessly. That is contributory negligence, and yet it is practically an accident in the nature of what is called an act of God. Another reason for doing away with all this law of exception—of contributory and other negligence—is that we have held it to be a first principle, as well as one of our first objects, to avoid litigation. [*Cheers.*] My experience is that good employers do not grudge compensation to workmen injured in their service, but they do grudge compensation which goes into the pockets of the lawyers. ["Hear, hear!"] One hon. Friend in giving me his experience has told me that in two cases which he was absolutely bound to fight, and in both of which he won, the costs amounted to more than any compensation ever given under the Employers' Liability Act. That is one of the grounds on which we took such strong exception to the Bill of my right hon. Friend opposite, which was described to me as not being an Employers' Liability Bill so much as a Lawyers' Employment Bill. [*Laughter and cheers.*] We are satisfied to have our Bill judged as a compensation Bill. If it should be said, "You have done nothing towards prevention," we say that at present it has not been conclusively proved that any large measure of legislation is required in that direction, but if it should be so proved it should be the subject of a separate Bill. I now wish to deal with one or two objections taken by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He said that the Bill does not deal with common employment; that it does not abolish the doctrine of common employment; and he complains that we have discriminated between particular trades. Although it is always difficult to defend an arbitrary line with regard to the application of any principle, we have a good deal to say in defence of our proposal. I do not wish the House to consider that at this stage we make an absolutely hard-and-fast proposal. ["Hear, hear!"] It may be that a particular employment may be pointed out to us in the course of discussion in Committee which undoubtedly ought clearly to come under the application of this Bill. If such a case there be, the Government would be prepared to consider its admission. The hon. Member for Gateshead spoke of the Bill being so drawn as to exclude shipbuilding, the forge, the steam hammer, the printing-house, the foundry, and the roundabout at fairs. So far as I know, the Bill does not exclude the roundabout at fairs—[*laughter*]—but otherwise every one of these is included in it. Discrimination has been exercised in order to exclude two or three large industries. The shipping trade is one—not shipbuilding, but the shipping trade. That we have done deliberately, and we have done it because we believe that if the shipping trade is to be dealt with at all it must be dealt with in a separate Bill. Then another case is that of the agricultural labourers. On the part of such men there has been no demand for such legislation. There is another reason why I think the agricultural labourers may be fairly excluded from the Bill, and that applies also to the very small employers who are carrying out work in workshops, and that is the reason that we are dealing not with accidents caused by negligence, but with inevitable accident or misfortune, and we are endeavouring to meet this misfortune, and we treat the employer as the most convenient channel from which compensation can come; but when you are dealing with an employer who is practically in no better position than his workpeople, who has as little capital as his workpeople, there is no reason why the incidence of this misfortune should fall upon him. In the case of the small farmer or the holder of the small workshop, it is a fact that their pecuniary position is very little removed from that of the labourers whom they employ, and under these circumstances we have not thought it right to impose upon them this new liability. We have had regard to the experience of Germany. Let me say in passing as to what fell from the hon. Member for Derby, that if the German scheme were really as unsatisfactory as he had been led to believe it to be from some public documents which he had investigated, there would not have been this continual pressure to extend its operation. I must say my own opinion is altogether different from his; because, so far as I have been informed in the matter, and from the articles and speeches—the most recent ones—which I have read on the subject, they speak strongly in favour of it both on behalf of the employers and the workmen. I do not say that the system is not open to very serious criticism—that, I think, will probably be true of any scheme that may be proposed—but, on the whole, it has given satisfaction; and I believe it justifies us in carrying out a somewhat similar experiment. But it is not possible for us to adopt one part of the German scheme of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean spoke with great approval. It is quite true, as he says, that there the insurance is paid not by the individual employers, but by an association of employers formed for the purpose. The association can exercise a certain control over its individual members, and in that way it does something for prevention. But I do not imagine that even my right hon. Friend would suggest that in this country it would be possible, or, if possible, that it would be desirable, to force everybody in a particular trade into an association of this kind. The elaboration of the system, its bureaucratic tendency, and the arbitrary interference of officials are all matters which are so objectionable to English people, and especially to those who have been enabled to carry on their undertaking without any interference of the kind, that I believe it is absolutely impossible and absolutely impracticable to attempt any system of operations of that kind—["hear, hear!"]—and we have to fall back on the fact, so far as the pecuniary liability is concerned, either that the employer should take the liability upon himself—as I believe will happen in the vast number of cases—or, if he has taken an insurance, the insurance company will exercise something of that supervision which is now exercised by the associations in Germany. The right hon. Gentleman referred in terms of contempt to the provisions of the Bill providing that, where the employer has been guilty of gross and wilful default or negligence, the injured workman shall have the alternative of proceeding under the common, civil, or criminal law. The right hon. Gentleman said we had given the workman no more than he has at present. But we do not take anything away. ["Hear, hear!"] One of the objections taken to proposals of this kind has been that by introducing a universal system of compensation you made no distinction between a good employer or a bad employer, and you left the employer who might be guilty of this culpable negligence absolutely free, by a small pecuniary payment, of the civil or the criminal law. What we want to make clear is that we do not do anything of the kind. Where the particular form of liability is incurred, it amounts, in my opinion—as I think it does in the opinion of every honourable man—to a crime, because deliberate negligence which causes the loss of life is neither more nor less than manslaughter; and where that is the case all the remedies either in the civil or the criminal law remain in operation; and that includes the possibility to begin with of unlimited compensation, and removes altogether the limit which has been fixed in the Bill. Some reference has been made to the scale of compensation. I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to think that it was an illiberal scale. I do not think that will be the opinion of the House or the country. ["Hear, hear!"] I believe that we have gone to the verge of excess in the liberal in the Bill. Some reference has been pointed out that in the case of permanent incapacity it may involve a pension for life of the person injured. I think that is perfectly justifiable compensation, but at the same time it must be evident that where that is included the most liberal scale is intended. On the other hand, in order that employers and others may not be alarmed at this liability, I should like to say that the evidence which I have obtained from some of the great railway companies, where employment is extremely dangerous, goes to show that in what is called permanent incapacity the average permanent incapacity is not more than two or three years. The average of partial incapacity is, of course, very much shorter indeed. In some very interesting articles which appeared in *The Daily Chronicle* on this subject a return was given which showed that since the passing of the Employers' Liability Act there had been, I think, 2,590 cases tried, and that the average compensation received in these cases, which went into Court, and which, therefore, may be assumed to have been serious cases, was only £42. Our maximum limit is £300 in the case

Mr. J. Chamberlain.

of death, and it may be a larger sum in the case of permanent incapacity. We, therefore, are not open to the criticism that we have dealt illiberally with the question of compensation. As to the cost, there is good evidence to show that it will not be a heavy burden upon British trade and industry. My right hon. Friend went on to say that in his opinion the burden would be thrown upon wages. I think that is an entire mistake. In foreign countries this risk of compensation for all accidents is described as a risk *professionnaire*—that is to say, a risk which is one of the charges upon the trade in which it is incurred; and it is supposed to be as much a part of the cost of producing the article as, for instance, insurance against fire, or even the cost of materials. See where the argument of my right hon. Friend leads him. If this charge is a charge which must of necessity come out of wages, every other charge must also come out of wages, and we get to this—that suppose there is an increased charge for compensation amounting to £100 a year, and at the same time a decreased charge for raw material amounting to £100, then it does not come out of wages. If, on the other hand, there should be an increased cost of raw materials of £100 a year, £200 a year would have to come out of wages. So that every addition to the cost of manufacture must come out of wages, which I think will reduce the argument to an absurdity. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not think workmen need fear this, because they are represented by those powerful organisations the trade unions, whose sole *raison d'être* is that they raise or maintain the rate of wages. If according to the right hon. Gentleman it be true that whenever a new charge is laid upon a business it must by some rule of political economy with which he is acquainted come out of wages, all I can say is that in that case he has struck the ground altogether from under the feet of the trade unions, for they have in these circumstances absolutely no reason to exist at all, and they have deceived those who have been content to support them. I may add that I do not believe that up to the present time that has been the experience of German manufacturers. I think the Return shows that the rate of wages in Germany has been advancing as in other countries; and it can be proved that the considerable liability which has been thrown upon the manufacturers by this compensation for accidents has had no effect whatever in reducing the rate of wages. I have pointed out that one object of the first importance of our Bill is to get rid of litigation. We have attempted to do that in several ways by the simplicity and definiteness of our proposals. If a man is injured in the course of his employment he is no longer asked any question how the injury was obtained. He is in every case a subject for compensation. He is not asked what the amount of compensation is to be, or, at all events, he is only asked very limited questions in regard to it, because a maximum payment equivalent to half his wages is the sum which is fixed under the Bill as being maximum payment that he can receive. If the employer offers him half his wages there can be by no possibility any litigation, for the workman will then have got everything he can get under this Bill. If, however, the employer considers the case is one in which justice will be done by payment of a quarter of the wages, or some other sum, there is a provision made for the workman and the employer to come to an agreement. If they fail to come to an agreement, the matter goes at once to the County Court Judge, and the County Court Judge decides without appeal. I quite agree that an appeal may occasionally be desirable; but where the subject-matter is not large the system of appeals only leads to expense, to annoyance, and to irritation; and in this case, where we desire to avoid expense and irritation, we have decided that the decision in every case shall be made by the County Court Judge, or by an arbitrator appointed by him, without appeal at all. It has been suggested that there may be malingering. I think it will be difficult for malingering to take place. In such a case the arbitrator—that is to say, the County Court Judge—would be entitled to call in a medical man, and on the evidence of the medical man decide how long the compensation should be paid; and at short periods, either at the option of the employer or the workman, a further application might be made to the medical man to see whether the workman was still in a condition which required compensation. I do not think that is a case which will often happen. In the associations very little difficulty has been found under that head, and I think that under our Bill very little difficulty will be found either. I think the only other point to which reference has been made is the contracting-out clause. I think my hon. Friend the Member for Gateshead did not entirely understand the clause as it is proposed. It is a clause which allows contracting out only in cases in which the terms of the agreement under which the workman desires to contract out are better than the terms under the Bill. The reason for that is that we do not want to prevent a workman from doing better for himself by the consent and with the good will of his employer than legislation could do for him—[*cheers*]—because legislation after all will never represent the maximum of the generosity of the employer. I have known many cases in which employers have done much more for injured workmen than anything done under this Bill, and, if employers choose to make offers of that kind, there can be no reason for preventing a workman from agreeing with his employer to contract out.

Mr. W. ALLAN: Supposing a workman signs a paper on entering employment asking for no more than £100, will he still be at liberty to fall back on the Bill and demand £300?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly. The contract he signs in those circumstances would be mere waste paper. It would have no validity unless there was a certificate from the Registrar of Friendly Societies that the terms the workman agreed to accept were better than those of the Bill. He is protected by the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and the reason for putting him in the Bill is his great acquaintance with actuarial calculations connected with benefit societies of all kinds. I think I have gone through all the points raised hitherto in this discussion. I think I am entitled to hope, after what we have heard from both sides of the House, that this Bill will be received in a friendly spirit, and, in that case, the Government will be prepared to meet in a friendly spirit all efforts made in any quarter of the House to amend it. We are perfectly well aware that this is an extremely complicated and intricate subject—complicated because of the extraordinary differences in the conditions of different trades and of the same trades at different times; and unless we had prepared a Bill as big as the German legislation—which we could never have hoped to carry through the House—we could not have dealt with every conceivable case that would arise. In the discussion, whether in the grand Committee, or in the whole House, as may be hereafter decided, we may find defects which may be supplied. Meanwhile I say it is an honest attempt to deal with a great evil—with what I have ventured to call a great scandal—namely, that industrious, honourable workmen who come to trouble through no fault of their own in the course of their employment, and as the inevitable and consequential risk of that employment, should be turned into the street, and thrown upon the rates without anything in the nature of legal compensation. [*Cheers.*] That has always seemed to me to be neither more nor less than a scandal. I believe we shall achieve a great object if we relieve this class of the community, than whom I am convinced no class is more deserving; and, I believe, none are more ready to recognise this duty than the good employer. There may be bad employers, but I am certain these are an infinitesimal minority, and good employers are not at all unwilling, so far as my experience goes, to put their hands in their pockets and go a little further than hitherto, provided they could secure this object, and provided they know that all they contribute will go directly to the relief of what I may call undeserved distress. The difficulty has been hitherto that there was no certainty that the legislation which we were passing would benefit the workman for whose advantage it was really intended. I am very doubtful indeed whether the effect of the Employers' Liability Act has been on the whole to place the workman in a better position than he was in before. I believe in some cases it has substituted legal liability for the voluntary liability which was more generous and liberal in its terms, and certainly it has induced a great deal of litigation and a great deal of ill-feeling. I think this Bill is based upon a different principle to either the old Employers' Liability Act or the Bill of the late Government. It is based upon the principle of relieving the workman and not of punishing the employer. I have said we are dealing with the whole of the accidents which occur in the course of employment, and nobody has ever pretended that the accidents for which the employer is morally liable have ever amounted to more than a mere fraction of the whole. Under these circumstances, if we could get rid of that confusion of ideas which seems to hold the employer liable for all accidents, and consider only that we are now doing for all workmen engaged in these trades what good and generous employers have been doing for those over whom they have had control, then I think we may receive the general good will of the employers of labour, and I am certain the Bill will be recognised as a great boon by the employés themselves.

MR. W. R. BOUSFIELD (Hackney, N.), said that, considering the Bill would introduce an entirely novel principle, the Government might well be satisfied with the reception it had met with on both sides of the House. As one who had advocated this principle for many years, at a time when it had very few advocates in the House or out of it, and as having in 1893 seconded the Amendment in which the present Secretary for the Colonies brought it before the House, he desired to express his satisfaction that the principle had now been adopted, and was likely to be carried into law. He hoped that the assistance of the workmen themselves might in some way be brought in in order to preserve some kind of economy in the administration of the Fund. As the Bill stood, no precaution was taken against malingering or the wasteful use of the money. It had been suggested that the County Court judge or some other single arbitrator should be appointed to settle any dispute that might arise as to the amount of compensation to be given. He would suggest that they should follow the plan adopted in Germany, and have a Board composed equally of representatives of employers and workmen, with an independent person appointed by the Home Office as Chairman. With regard to the case of personal negligence, he expressed the hope that where there was personal negligence on the part of the employer, the remedy should be cumulative; that the remedy under the Employers' Liability Act should be in addition to that under the Bill. This was a very obvious way of strengthening the Bill on a point where it had been most attacked from the other side. This was a Bill for compensation, but at the same time, if they could do anything in the way of prevention it was well to do it thoroughly and systematically. The Bill professed to do that up to a certain point, because it said that where there was wilful default the workman should have recourse to the Employers' Liability Act for his remedy. No reasonable employer could object to penalise the personal negligence of an employer to a much greater extent than it was done at the present time. From another point of view employers would not object to his suggestion. There would be a considerable system of insurance under the Bill, and he took it an employer could insure against personal negligence as well as against anything else. He took it that it would be contrary to public policy for an employer to insure against his own personal negligence, and the best way to prevent it would be to say that, in addition to the ordinary compensation which would come from the Insurance Company, the workman, in a case of personal negligence, should have a personal remedy under the Employers' Liability Act against his employer, who would have to pay any sum awarded out of his own pocket. As to contracting out, it was obvious that, although the phrase was applicable to the Bill, the thing in substance was not in the Bill at all. ["Hear, hear!"] It was distinctly declared that a workman should not barter away his rights unless he got something better in exchange for them. He hoped it would be possible to extend the scope of the Bill at a later stage. It would be much better to proceed by way of exclusion—providing that the Bill should not apply to this class or the other—than to attempt to define the particular classes to which the Bill did apply. These definitions would be a fruitful source of litigation, as so many cases would be found on the borderland. In connection with the Bill of 1893 he moved an Amendment, which was supported by the Labour Members, and ultimately forced on the Government, providing that persons whose health was injured in the "deadly trades" should have the same rights to compensation as those who suffered in life or limb by accident. He hoped that such a provision would be included in the present

Measure, and that there would be alterations in regard to several small points, which would simplify the practice and procedure under the old Employers' Liability Act.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

MR. ALEXANDER URE (Linlithgow) said this Bill went a step in the right direction, and his only regret was that that step was not a longer one, for he frankly admitted that for many years he had sat at the feet of the Secretary for the Colonies on this question. In November, 1892, the right hon. Gentleman contributed an article to the *Nineteenth Century*, in which he sketched out a scheme which was simple, bold, and comprehensive, by which all the workmen in this country would be entitled in case of accident to have compensation, with one exception only—where the accident was due to their own fault and negligence—and he expressed the view, in which he himself concurred, that the consequence of this enlargement of employers' liability would be, not to impose an additional burden on the employer, not to diminish the wages fund, but to increase the price of the article to the consumer and to lay the burden on the consumer in a different form from that in which it formerly lay, because, as he forcibly pointed out, the consumer had to pay, in one way or another, for the mishaps that befell the soldiers of industry, either by way of charitable contributions or Poor Law relief. It was because he adhered to the views of the Colonial Secretary that he expressed his regret that this Bill was not a far larger and more comprehensive Measure. There were three objects which an Employers' Liability Bill must be designed to subserve if they were to predicate of it, "This is a good Bill." In the first place, it should tend to minimise the risks of accident to workmen; then to minimise the hardship of accidents to workmen—in other words, to enlarge the number of people who would be compensated and the amount of compensation; and next it should tend to diminish friction between labour and capital—in other words, to eliminate the risks and uncertainties attendant on litigation. Because this Bill, as far as it went, subserved these three objects he should give it his hearty support. If it gave the compensation which the Colonial Secretary thought in 1892 should be given for all accidents and to all categories of workmen, it would be an ideal Bill. Obviously the Bill would limit the cases of hardship, inasmuch as it included a far larger number of accidents than any previous Bill, and it would tend to diminish litigation because it would remove the defences which had hitherto been open to employers; and every Bill which tended to remove the defences which at present existed, tended to diminish litigation. In that respect he joined issue with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, when he reminded the House that the Bill of the late Government had been wittily described as not an Employers' Liability, but a Lawyers' Employment Bill. That might have been witty, but it was certainly untrue, because the Bill was designed to remove the defence of common employment, and every defence they removed lessened to that extent the chances of litigation. It was because he differed from the right hon. Member for East Fife and the hon. and learned Member for Haddington upon the question of the prevention of accidents that he ventured to give the House his own experience, which had been somewhat extended in connection with employers' liability cases. In the first place he thought there had been a tendency to exaggerate the number of cases of accidents to workmen, due to the fault or negligence of the employer. The Secretary of State thought this Bill would include 70 per cent. of accidents to workmen. For his part he thought that was an under-estimate. It would include far more than 70 per cent., because the number of accidents at the present time, which could be said to be due to the fault of the negligence of the employer, was an extremely limited number, and far fewer than might be supposed. Further, it appeared to him the Bill would tend to prevention because it increased the number of cases in which the employer was to be made liable, and in proportion as they increased the number of cases they increased the incentives to care on the part of the employer in carrying on his business. Dealing with the argument that the Bill would lead to insurance by employers, and therefore to an increase of negligence, he remarked that in Scotland employers did insure against claims by workmen, but no one had suggested that there had been an increase of negligence or carelessness on the part of employers of labour in Scotland, or that wages had gone down during the 15 years in which that system of insurance had been in operation. As a matter of fact, wages had increased during that period. To his mind this conclusively proved that the wages fund would not be diminished by increasing the compensation. No one could dispute that the Employers' Liability Act very greatly enlarged the responsibility of employers to their workmen, and it had no doubt entailed a vast amount of expense upon employers. They had habitually insured against it, and workmen's wages had increased. He viewed without fear the prospect of a still further increase of liability tending in any way to diminish the wages of the workmen. He said, further, that insurance tended to produce carefulness. Insurance companies were not likely to insure employers of labour if they found their businesses were conducted in a negligent fashion. On the contrary, the insurance offices would increase their premiums as they found any particular employers carrying on business without care for the safety of life and limb of the workmen and without employing the best plant and machinery and maintaining the best possible order. If the employer insured, so much the better for the workmen, for if insurance were prohibited they would have men of conscience and capital retiring from business altogether, and the work left in the hands of men without either conscience or capital, or else the workmen would find they would fail absolutely to recover the compensation due to them in the event of any accident befalling them. They were now insured of compensation, and they were insured of men of capital and conscience carrying on the business so long as the system of insurance was allowed. He quite saw that if they were enlarging the scope of the employer's liability for the category of accidents for which he was liable it might be necessary to limit the amount of compensation. He rejoiced to think in the Bill the Government had presented to the House that, although they had fixed the scale of compensation they had done so upon generous terms, which no workmen would be disposed to disagree with. He entertained a strong objection to contracting out, but so far as he understood the explanation given by the Home Secretary, contracting out had ceased to be an event of any importance, because, although the Bill allowed contracting out, it only did so where the workman would be absolutely certain to get as much as the Bill would give him in the event of a mishap befalling him. He hoped the anticipations of the unfavourable reception the Bill would have from the House would turn out to be absolutely untrue, and that they should, in the course of the Session, place upon the Statute Book the present Bill somewhat enlarged in its scope, so as to make it a true charter of liberties to the working people.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince), speaking from his experience as a colliery proprietor, regretted that the Home Secretary had adopted this new method of attempting to alter the present Act. He believed that a very little alteration of the Act would make it a good one, and he thought in going into that great question they had embarked in a very difficult matter. In his opinion, what was wanted for the Employers' Liability Act was the abolition of the doctrine of common employment. Everybody agreed to that. The next thing was that contracting out should only be allowed in dangerous industries, which were working under a safety Act, and the next was that it should not be a condition of employment, but that it should be voluntary. A colliery belonging to him had been working since the Act was passed with all those advantages which the late Home Secretary desired they should have, they had been able to contract out or not as they liked, most of them had not contracted out, and there had been, he believed, but one case—a mere bagatelle—from that time to this. His impression was that there would be a great deal of litigation upon this Bill. Of all the Bills he had ever heard of, he believed this would be the fullest of litigation. One thing common to both the late Home Secretary's Bill and this Bill was that they both destroyed the permanent relief societies, which were the only societies which really met the cases of such accidents without law. Under their auspices and the public opinion of the workmen that was brought to bear, they brought the man who was slightly injured back to work in proper time. If a man with a slight injury showed a natural tendency to idleness when he was receiving 50 per cent. of large earnings for doing nothing, how soon would he come back to his work? Although he was anxious to give just attention to this Measure, he respectfully urged that the proper course would be to amend the Act, and only to bring in such a Measure as this if relief societies were not formed.

MR. GEORGE HARWOOD (Bolton) said he thought the Home Secretary would have to reconsider the answer he gave as to the compensation to a man permanently injured. He might have misunderstood him as to it being for life, but the result of that might be that it would be much better to kill a man than to permanently injure him. The Colonial Secretary had said that the agricultural labourers had made no demand for inclusion in the Bill, but he thought they in that House had to consider the claims of those who did not make demands as well as of those who did. The suggestion he had to offer was that this was a Bill in favour of the strong and neglecting the weak. It was a Bill drawn up for the benefit of those who were largely capable of looking after themselves, and it excluded those who could not look after themselves—who could not put electoral pressure upon them, and were therefore very liable to be neglected. From his experience, and from what he knew, he should be inclined to say that there were a larger percentage of accidents in the trades which were excluded from the Bill than in those which were included. The excluded trades, the smaller trades, were not so well looked after by the owners, and were not so well watched by the men. In the trades included in the Bill they had trades unions, who looked after the interests of the men, not merely in regard to wages, but also in regard to saftey and the conditions of work. It was in the smaller trades where they had not this care that they wanted this protection. He put this forward, not on the ground of compensation so much as on the ground of prevention. Practically all accidents might be prevented. It was a matter of care, of foresight, of watching, of providing good material and good men. He believed that accidents had been reduced to the small point they had been because of the liability of the employer to pay for the consequences. They must extend that liability to the other trades, and the result would be that they would have a great number of accidents prevented which now occurred. They must bring the lever of this responsibility to bear, and they would lift up the whole level of security in those trades. He put this consideration before the Home Secretary in a spirit of the greatest friendliness to the Bill. Another point was as to the exclusion of women and children. He knew this would complicate the question, but it was a serious matter which the House ought carefully to consider. In his own neighbourhood there were thousands of households which depended on the labour of women, and largely also on the labour of children, and these households were of the character necessarily which would most require compensation in case the wage-earner was taken away.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY was understood to say that women and children were included in the Bill.

MR. HARWOOD said he was delighted to hear that.

MR. J. WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said that, as an employer of about one-thirtieth part of the whole mining population of Scotland, he rose to express general and hearty approval of this attempt of the Government to place the subject of employers' liability on a satisfactory footing, though there were two or three points in which he thought amendment would be necessary. Certainly it was a most generous Measure, and he recognised the necessity for such a generous Measure. He had expressed to his constituents his hearty approval of any attempt to give compensation for all accidents, and he was therefore a little disappointed to find from the Home Secretary's statement, as he understood it, that certain trades only were to be included in the Bill. He thought that all accidents should be included, but still he was not going to condemn the Measure because it did not go so far. If the Government, however, recognised the necessity of putting all industries on the same footing, they would have his hearty approval. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife that if he went to his constituency and condemned this Bill he would not meet with a very hearty reception. He ventured to say that no man, at all events in Scotland, would go down to the mining districts and condemn this Bill. He hoped to take part in the Committee of this Bill, and attempt to make it a good Bill, which it was not altogether at present. He did not altogether approve of the proposal to give weekly wages to a man who had been injured. Supposing a man who had been injured was an employé of a limited liability company, and the company failed, what redress would he have? ["Hear, hear!"] He thought it would be much better that a total sum should be assessed by the arbiter. In the case of a fatal accident he thought it would be well that the sum to be paid in compensation should be invested on behalf of the workman's legal representative, so as to prevent the money being squandered. There was one point to which he wished to call attention. Contracting out was not legal in Scotland. The association to which he belonged took the opinion of the late Lord Advocate when the Act of 1880 was brought in. As an association, they endeavoured to make arrangements with their workmen, but they found that they could not do so according to the law of Scotland. They could make arrangements for non-fatal accidents, but not for fatal accidents. The Government should therefore take this matter into consideration. On the whole, however, he gave his hearty support to the principle of the Bill as it stood. He looked upon it as one of the greatest achievements in social legislation which any Government had undertaken, and of far greater value than any Education Bill. The Government would earn the lasting gratitude of many constituencies throughout the country, and if they would extend the Bill to all industries he was sure that the Government would become more popular still.

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said he could not indorse the principle of the Bill, because the men he represented were excluded from the benefits of it. He could not understand why seamen should have been denied the privilege of the Measure. In 1880 seamen were denied the protection of the Act of that year; in 1887 it was proposed to extend the operation of the Bill to seamen; in 1893 the seamen were excluded; and in 1897 the seamen had been left out of the Bill. There were, however, more men killed and drowned at sea every year than were killed in all the shore industries put together. On the ground of being connected with a dangerous trade, seamen had a right to ask why they were excluded. One of the arguments put forward was that seamen had exceptional protection which workmen had not. The Merchant Shipping Act had only one clause which gave the seamen any protection so far as life and limb were concerned. It was the 458th Section which made a shipowner responsible that he should send his ship to sea in a seaworthy condition. But many accidents occurred after the ship had left port, probably through the neglect of the captain, and every effort should be made by means of legislation to reduce the loss of life. He hoped the Government would be prepared to accept an Amendment giving the seamen the protection of the Employers' Liability Act.

*Mr. WARR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) admitted that there was much force in Mr. Havelock Wilson's observations upon the important question of whether or not seamen should be included in any Measure dealing with employers' liability, but it was not a question that could be discussed at this stage. Anyone who had given attention to this matter, and, still more, anyone who had seen anything of the practical operation of the present law, must admit that the question was on every side beset with the greatest difficulties. He had supposed that it was almost universally admitted that the doctrine of common employment was not founded upon any true view of justice, and was consequently doomed to disappearance in any Measure which might be introduced dealing with the liability of employers. If this doctrine was done away with and nothing more was done, the matter would rest upon a sure foundation, and, strictly logically, their position would be unassailable. The workmen would then be able to make the employer responsible for damages for injury sustained by the negligence of the employer or of their fellow workman. In every case the burden of proof of such negligence would rest upon the workman. The burden could not be shifted upon the employer, according to sound reasoning, to prove that there was no negligence on his part; but if the law was placed upon this basis it was clear that there must be litigation in every case. Litigation between employer and employed was unfair. It was unfair towards the workman, for he did not get what was awarded to him. It had often been said that it was unfair because the workman could not fight with his employer, because one was poor and the other rich. His impression was that a jury did not allow a poor man to suffer from the fact that the employer's case was presented to them from the front row, and supported by an army of expert witnesses. But the result of litigation was thoroughly unfortunate. Relations between employer and employed were strained, and the man's position for the future, if he recovered from the accident, was injured. He was marked as a man who brought an action. From the point of view of the employer, litigation was equally unsatisfactory. He must lose all his expenses, whether he was successful or not in the action. He had to calculate whether he would fight and make a certain loss to avoid payment of a claim for which he thought he was not responsible, or to make a payment to get rid of this expense—a payment which he regarded as extortion. For both sides the worst remedy was litigation. But if litigation was to be avoided, some system analogous to insurance must be introduced, and he was glad to see that it was this principle which had commended itself to the Government. As he understood the Bill, it would give to the workmen in the particular trades to which it applied indemnity, reasonably and necessarily limited in extent, against all accidents, even though there was contributory negligence on the part of the workmen, and even though the accident was the result of negligence of a fellow-workman, and it would leave the employer with unlimited liability if the accident was through his wilful act or default, or the wilful act or default of anyone for whom he was, as the law now stood, responsible, and it would provide for the settlement of disputes by arbitration. Now, that was an immense gain to the workman, and in exchange for that gain he might well give up the right to the abolition of the doctrine of common employment. The contracting out clause would safeguard workmen, so that those who contracted out would not be in a worse position than they would be in if no special contract had been made. The Bill, in fact, embodied a kind of standard contract. That, so far, was perfectly fair. He recognised that the intention of the framers of the Bill was to do full justice between employers and employed. He was of opinion, however, that the Measure ought to apply to many other trades besides those to which its operation was at present limited, and that the doctrine of common employment as affecting trades to which the Bill did not extend ought to be abolished.

*MR. THOMAS BUCKNILL (Surrey, Epsom) believed that the Bill would be accepted by those whom it concerned as an excellent Measure, but feared that a great deal of dissatisfaction would be felt by those who were excluded from its benefits. Supposing a shoemaker in his constituency were to say to him, "I am one of 200 or 300 employés. We make boots by machinery, but our establishment is not a factory. There are, however, accidents, and I want to know why we are excluded from the operation of the Bill?" What answer could he make? He could not say that the Government could not afford to pay, because this was not a question of national payment; nor could he say that shoemakers were not as much entitled to consideration as other workmen. Why was there no provision in the Bill with regard to employments injurious to health? In 1893 those who sat on his side of the House gave great support to the proposal that where there was a trade injurious to health, the employer should be liable unless he could prove that reasonable precautions had been taken by him to prevent harmful results. Another matter which was not dealt with was the question of sub-contracting. In 1893 that was discussed on an Amendment providing that if a contractor transferred part of his work to a man who turned out to be a man of straw, a workman who was injured while employed by the latter could recover from the original contractor. The Secretary for the Colonies had said nothing that evening about persons who were engaged in domestic service—a subject to which he referred in 1893. Whilst he was not sure that it would be right to include every class of servants engaged in manual labour, he had no doubt that great complaints would be heard when the labouring classes realised that only a few trades had been included in the purview of the Bill. Why, he wished to know, was the honest sailor left out in the cold? [" Hear, hear ! "] Another question that would be asked was why the Government did not propose to abolish in all cases the doctrine of common employment, which was condemned on both sides of the House in 1893? He trusted that the Measure would be amended in this respect. He understood that it was intended by the arbitration clause to confine the proceedings to those before the County Court Judge or the arbitrator, but he was afraid that that provision would not prevent litigation. The House of Commons might try to prevent litigation, but its efforts to that purpose, however great, would fail. One passage in the speech of the late Home Secretary had rather astonished him. When the present Colonial Secretary moved his famous Amendment to the Bill of 1893 to the effect that no alteration of the law would be satisfactory or final unless all employed persons were entitled to recover compensation for injuries received except when caused by their own negligence, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife said it was an academic opinion which nobody was prepared to put down on paper, and which could not come into operation for years to come. The right hon. Gentleman's speech that evening was not consistent with that opinion. He had realised that evening how interesting it was to contrast the boldness with their timidity when they found themselves in power. It was well enough when in Opposition to say " give everybody compensation all round," but when a responsible Government, to say " the case is altered." He would like to see all workmen placed on the same platform if possible. [" Hear, hear ! "] The principle of common employment was a technical, unfair, and improper defence, and he would be glad to see it done away with. At the same time he thought the House ought to play fair with all industries. He sincerely hoped that the Government might see their way, if not in this Bill, in some other, to put all workmen on a par, instead of creating the inequalities which seemed to be created by this Act. [" Hear, hear ! "]

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, E.) said that representing an industrial constituency where most of the men worked underground—the most dangerous employment to be found in this country—he entirely approved of the Bill, and he would have no fear at all in recommending it to his constituents, so far as it went. [" Hear, hear ! "] He hoped, however, that the Government, having noted the desire even on their own side of the House, that the Bill should be extended, would take every opportunity of amplifying and extending it.

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said that as a large employer of labour he naturally took a great interest in the Bill. The large amount of compensation that would have to be paid would have, in the first place, to come out of the pockets of the employers, they being, as the Colonial Secretary had said, the most convenient source. The compensation could not come out of wages, and though ultimately it might turn out that the article the manufacturer put on the market might rise in price, and that the consumer might have to pay, the employers would have to pay at first. In those circumstances he could hardly be expected to welcome the Bill with enthusiasm. Still, it was a Bill for which he was thoroughly prepared, and one which would do an immense amount of good to the working classes. [" Hear, hear ! "] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife had complained that, though this was a Bill to compensate workpeople for injuries received, it was not a Bill to prevent accidents. At the present time no accident could take place in any factory without being immediately reported on by the factory inspector, and if that was not sufficient, the Government should give the inspectors greater power. The great advantage of this Bill was that it ought to do away with any kind of litigation. Every accident was provided for at once. He would be glad if some method could be devised by which the compensation to widows and orphans could be given in weekly payments instead of a lump sum. ["Hear, hear!"] In Germany an annuity of so much a week was paid through the Post Office. He also thought that something should be done by way of inspection of cases in which compensation was claimed. Friendly societies always had their own doctor, and the members looked into cases as well, so that a man must be really ill to get his payments. He thought a doctor, independent both of the employer and the workman, ought to be employed by the Government to look into cases in which compensation was claimed. If he understood the Bill rightly, everything by way of compensation was fixed, either for temporary injury, permanent injury, or death; but if a workman thought he could get more under the old Act he might sue under it. He did not think a workman was likely to go from one Act to another; but a great many other actions were brought, not by workpeople, but by speculative attorneys, and he would like to close the door to any such actions. The chief object of the Bill was to do away with all actions of employed against employer, and what was wanted was a simple Measure under which the workman could at once get his compensation. He hoped that the Home Secretary would give the matter his attention. ["Hear, hear!"] On the whole he thought the Bill was a great advance on any other brought before the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. J. G. BUTCHER (York) thought the Home Secretary might be well satisfied with the favourable criticisms the Bill had received at the hands of the House. It had been admitted on both sides that the Bill if passed into law would be a great and material Amendment of the law in favour of the workmen of this country. The Bill was not based upon any narrow or technical or legal considerations, but upon matters of broad general policy. It recognised the fact that compensation with workmen must be treated as part of the cost of production, and that as to some trades, the cost ought partly to be thrown on the employers in the first instance at any rate. The figures stated by the Colonial Secretary as to the percentage of cases that were wholly uncompensated under the present law were startling, and formed matter for serious consideration. Therefore, he accepted with gratitude this Bill, which gave compensation to workmen in a number of cases from which they were now excluded. There was a subsidiary benefit. It was clear that workmen would receive their compensation at a largely decreased cost of litigation. Few proposals were received with more favour than those to reduce the cost of litigation. It was bad enough to lose a law suit, but it was more disagreeable to pay the lawyer's bill. He did not think, however, the lawyers need be afraid that the fruits of their toil would be entirely destroyed; and in any case, when the costs of litigation were to come out of labour, these costs should be reduced to the smallest minimum possible. No doubt there were certain omissions; but if a case was shown in Committee for including any trades which at present were excluded, the Government would, he trusted, give reasonable consideration to such case, and would add trades which were at present excluded. As regarded the excluded trades, which would be dealt with by the existing law, was there any reason why Amendments should not be introduced for the purpose of abolishing those technical difficulties which had been engrafted by judge-made law on the common law, and hampered the workman in obtaining reasonable compensation? He hoped the Government would accept Amendments which would have the effect of abolishing the doctrine of common employment, and modifying the law with regard to contributory negligence, and perhaps some other particulars. He suggested, further, that the machinery of the Judicial Trustee Act might be utilised in order that the sum awarded for compensation in case of death might be so invested as to insure that the money should be spent in the most advantageous way for the benefit of the wife and children. He was not competent to express an opinion as to the cost to the employers, but when they found Members of the House, themselves large employers of labour, accepting the Bill as a fair and reasonable one, they might safely say that injustice was not going to be done to the employers of the country. He thanked the Government for introducing the Bill, which he believed would be welcomed both by employers and employed.

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport) asked whether it was intended to give the advantages of the Bill to Government employés?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The Bill applies to such workmen.

MR. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.) rose to support the Bill. He believed that he had had as much experience as any Member of the House, except perhaps an hon. and learned Friend opposite, of the operation of the present Act, and although he did not agree with everything the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had said with regard to lawyers, he was prepared to accept the statement that the Measure which was carried in 1880 and the Measure of 1895 were Measures which provided far more for expensive litigation than for real relief of the sufferings of those who had met with accidents. He had had his attention called to cases of grave injustice, in which men who had unquestionably suffered through the fault of others had been deprived of compensation. It seemed to him that in dealing with hazardous trades the Home Secretary had taken a right and proper stand, for it was in such trades that the gravest injustice had been done working men. If there was one question more than another in which the working classes did take a deep and practical interest it was this question of employers' liability, and he believed that it could be solved in a spirit of fairness and moderation if hon. Members would approach it, he would not say from the workmen's point of view, but from the point of view of justice, and from the point of view in which the Home Secretary had put it before the House, that of dealing with hazardous trades. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but he was convinced that, apart from those employers who were most anxious to give to their workmen more compensation than the law would provide, there were a large number of men who could only be brought to see their duty by legislation, which would not only provide for material compensation, but also punish those employers who exposed their employés to reckless and unfair risks. He realised that the Home Secretary had taken a very wise course in submitting the question of the amount of compensation to the county court judge, but he did not agree that that should be absolutely without appeal. One did not like to mention names, but he could honestly say there were one or two county court judges who showed bias, he would not say on which side, and therefore, unless their decisions could be reviewed, it would be absolutely impossible for one side of the litigants to appear before them. With the reservation as to appeal, he could heartily support every proposal the Home Secretary had laid before the House.

SIR WILLIAM WILLS (Bristol, E.) said he wished the Home Secretary had seen his way to exclude the doctrine of common employment. He felt that the Bill might have been a great deal better if it had not simply selected certain trades for the benefit of its operation, but had been made generally applicable to all businesses. He believed there were few trades in which greater risk to life was incurred than in the building trades, and he could not understand why they should be exempted, or why workshops should be exempted. He could not see why contracting out should be allowed at all, especially in the case of men in the employment of great public companies. A most important point in a Bill of this kind should be to make employers take more precautions in fencing their machinery so as to protect their workpeople. He was quite sure that the risks run by agricultural labourers in connection with reaping and threshing machines were as great as those incurred by employés on railways or in engine works, and he trusted, from the sympathetic tone of the Home Secretary, that he would be willing to accept Amendments in Committee which would materially improve the Bill.

MR. MARK OLDROYD (Dewsbury) said he should be glad to know whether, in the case of accidents occurring when there had been a breach of a rule, notice of which was published in a factory, the right of claim for compensation would exist. This was a very serious matter, and if claims were barred on account of the violation of the rules of an establishment, the benefits of the Bill would be in a great measure counteracted.

MR. W. S. ROBSON (South Shields) asked what the intentions of the Government were with regard to seamen. They understood from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham that a second Measure was contemplated dealing with that class of men, but he did not understand from the right hon. Gentleman's remarks that this second Measure was promised.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I hope the House will be now disposed to allow the Debate to be concluded. [*Cheers.*] I hope I shall also be excused from going in any detail into some of the points raised. I have only, I am sure, to express on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government our appreciation of the impartial, and I may say friendly spirit, in which our proposals, startling and novel as they are, have been received. With reference to the question last addressed to me, I did not understand my right hon. Friend to make any promise with reference to legislation in regard to seamen. As I have said, they are not included in the Bill. What I understood my right hon. Friend to say was that it was the opinion of the Government that if they had to deal with seamen they must do so in a separate Bill; but to say that we have undertaken to introduce such a Bill, either this Session or in any subsequent Session, would be saying too much. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Dewsbury, he imagined that the breach by a workman of the rules under the Factory Acts would not bar his claim to compensation. One of the main objects of the Bill was to avoid raising the question of contributory negligence and to deal simply with the plain question of compensation for accidents. As he had said, this was a tentative Measure; he knew it contained anomalies, and the Government were only too thankful that there was a general sentiment that the boon which it extended to some of the industries of the country was such a real one that others ought to be admitted to it. He was not able to make any promise with reference to any action which the Government might take with respect to Amendments in Committee. All he could say was that, making a new departure in a Bill of considerable difficulty and complexity, they would endeavour to meet in the same impartial spirit with which the Bill had been treated, any Amendments proposed from any quarter, their only desire being to make it a useful Bill and conduct it through the House without any Party feeling. [*Cheers.*]

Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Chamberlain and the Attorney General; presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 213.]

In answer to Mr. CHARLES FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck),

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said he hoped the Bill would be circulated to-morrow or next day.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (UNDERMANNING) BILL.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon) moved the Second Reading of the Bill, which, he said, had been promoted with the view of remedying what he could not help thinking was an omission on the part of the authors of the Merchant Shipping Acts when they dealt with the subject of unseaworthy ships. An ordinary individual would certainly have imagined that an undermanned ship would have been included in the term "unsafe ship," but the Board of Trade had been advised that, although a vessel might be detained for defects in hull equipments or machinery, or for being overloaded or improperly loaded, no ship could be detained under the 459th Section of the Act of 1894, no matter how much she was undermanned. There had been undoubted cases of undermanning—such, for instance, as the *Deeside*, the *Cromartyshire*, and the *Port Yarrock*, but the Board of Trade were advised that a prosecution would not be successful under the 457th Section of the Merchant Shipping Act. Undermanning was a source of unseaworthiness, not only to the ship herself, but to all other ships on the high seas. The object of the present Bill was to remedy that defect of the law and to include in Section 459 undermanning as one of the reasons for which a ship might be detained. The Committee on this question, after careful inquiry, arrived at the conclusion that, although vessels were as a rule manned with careful regard to the safety of life and the welfare of the crew, yet that there were undoubted cases of undermanning. So far as the experience of the Board of Trade went, he had no hesitation in saying that it was entirely in accordance with the view expressed by the Manning Committee on this point. Therefore, it must not be imagined that this Bill was introduced because the Board of Trade believed that undermanning did prevail to any great extent, or that the great bulk of the shipowners of the country were indifferent to the lives and property intrusted to their care. But, as he had said, there were undoubted cases of undermanning brought before the Committee, and the evidence showed that, of 80 steamships and 65 sailing vessels with regard to which the question of manning was raised at wreck inquiries between 1878 and 1894, 45 steamships and 24 sailing vessels were found to be undermanned. The Committee, after carefully considering the evidence, came to the unanimous conclusion that undermanning should constitute unseaworthiness. There was a difference of opinion as to what action should be taken in order to put a stop to the evil. The majority recommended a manning scheme; the minority on the other hand, objected to that scheme. Undoubtedly, if a manning scale could be agreed upon which would meet all the circumstances and all the conditions of the various vessels affected, it would be a very desirable thing. Everyone would know exactly what he had to do, and would not be left to the discretion of any individual or any Board. After a careful consideration of the question he had come to the conclusion that a hard-and-fast manning scale was not reasonably possible. ["Hear, hear!"] Everyone who had any knowledge of shipping and of the various conditions under which ships went to sea, would agree that it would be an injustice to base such a scale solely on tonnage and rigging. An attempt was made some years ago by some mutual insurance associations to adopt a manning scale based on tonnage; but the plans of vessels changed so rapidly, that it was found impossible to carry it out, and it had to be abandoned. Again, there could be no doubt that if there was any attempt in the Bill to set up a hard-and-fast manning scale it would meet with strenuous resistance, and would, perhaps, lead to the defeat of their efforts to deal with the question. The procedure proposed to be adopted if the Bill became law was that, if the Board of Trade or any detaining officer of the Board had reason to believe that a vessel was undermanned, the vessel should be detained until the matter was examined into; and if after examination the Board of Trade decided that the vessel should be detained until the defect was remedied, and if the owner demurred to the course, the matter would go before a Court of Survey, composed of a Judge and two Assessors, who would decide the issue. It might be objected that that provision would place great power in the hands of the Board of Trade and their officers; but that power was hedged round by another provision that, if a ship were detained unreasonably, costs and damages could be obtained by the owner of the ship against the Board of Trade for such detention. It might be asked in what way would the inspectors of the Board of Trade be instructed in their duties if there was no hard-and-fast scale of manning. What the Board of Trade proposed to do was to draw up instructions of a more or less elastic character for their officers, and they would invite those interested in the shipping trade to associate themselves with the Board of Trade with a view to decide under what regulations ships should be detained. ["Hear, hear!"] He had no doubt, therefore, that they would be able to carry out the provisions of the Act in a manner that would be satisfactory to all concerned, and in no way injurious to the great industry it was their object to serve and promote. So far, he imagined, there would be little difference of opinion in regard to the Bill in that House. But the Bill as it stood applied only to British ships, and he had no doubt that there would arise in the House, as there had arisen elsewhere, a difference of opinion on that point. The law in regard to merchant shipping was by no means in a satisfactory condition in its application to foreign vessels. For instance, if a foreign ship carried 12 passengers from one port in the United Kingdom to another port in the United Kingdom it was amenable to the same law as a British ship; but if it carried less than 50 passengers out of the United Kingdom it was not amenable to the same law as a British ship. The section of the Merchant Shipping Act which the Bill proposed to amend did not apply to foreign ships; and that being so, after careful consideration, he had thought that it was better not to bring in other than British ships under the section so far as undermanning was concerned. He had felt that investigations into the internal economy of foreign ships might raise questions which it would be better to leave undisturbed, and would be, besides, difficult to carry out. But, having heard the views expressed from all quarters on the matter, he had decided that the best course to adopt was to amend the provision in Committee so as to make it apply to the undermanning of all ships, foreign or British. ["Hear, hear!"] It would no doubt add to the difficulties of administering the law, but it would be the duty of the Board of Trade to try to work it with as little friction as possible, and with as much consideration as was compatible with the carrying out of the provisions of this Measure. Of course, it would be understood that the Bill would only apply to ships which came into our ports to load. There would be no legitimate ground of complaint on the part of any foreign Government, if the ships of all nations in our ports were treated in the same manner as our own —["hear, hear!"]—and he hoped the justice of the proposition would be so apparent that difficulties would not be created. But in any case, the expression of opinion on this point had been so universal that it was impossible for the Government to resist it. [*Cheers.*] He hoped that the Measure would be recognised by the House as of a reasonable and proper character, in view of the duty of Parliament to safeguard life and property at sea, and that the Bill would be given a unanimous Second Reading. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen) said that no one who had followed the investigations of the Committee on the subject of manning could doubt that the subject required to be dealt with. Although the great majority of our shipowners had a proper regard for the lives of their crews, there was a certain number with regard to whom more stringent rules were needed. Collisions had been known to arise from undermanning, which might make it impossible for a proper look-out to be kept; and in the great gales which sometimes visited our coasts the foundering of a large number of the smaller steamers was, in a large degree, attributed by experts to undermanning. There would be no doubt as to the desirability of the Bill, and the only question was as to the framing of it. He agreed that, in the first instance at any rate, the right hon. Gentleman was justified in not adopting a fixed scale as recommended by the Committee. So much depended upon a ship's equipment and machinery. Of course, a great discretion had to be left to the Board of Trade; but since the passing of the last Merchant Shipping Act the discretion then given to the Board of Trade had not been badly exercised. During the last few years complaints had been very few, and he saw no reason to doubt that the same judgment would be exercised in the future. He supposed that the Board of Trade would issue rules indicating in a general way what the scale ought to be; and though minuteness and precision were impossible, guidance would thus be given to shipowners and to the officials. As to the application of the Bill to foreign ships loading in our ports, the justice of the claim could not, in the abstract, be contested; and having regard to the manifestation of opinion by which that claim was backed up, he could not quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman for acceding to it. But he had considerable doubt whether the application of the Bill to foreign vessels could be carried out. There would be a good many difficulties in the way. He would give one as an illustration. He believed that in the law of some countries, notably France, there was a provision that a certain proportion of the crew of a vessel should be citizens of those countries. If a foreign vessel were loading at one of our ports she might, while having the proportion to satisfy the law of her own country, not comply with our requirements. Whenever we imposed rules on foreign vessels we ran the risk of retaliation. More British vessels entered foreign ports than foreign vessels entered our ports, so if there were retaliation British shipowners would suffer most. If the Board of Trade considered the Bill workable they would not on the Opposition side of the House offer it any opposition. The chief cause of objection had been removed by the concession of the right hon. Gentleman, and there would be no difference of opinion as to giving the Bill a Second Reading, and he might say for those on that side of the House whose opinions he knew, that he would be only too glad to forward the progress of a Measure which they believed to be called for in the interests of humanity and the general interests of the merchant seamen of this country. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON said that he desired to thank the Government for this Bill, but it did not go quite far enough. Some day they would have to go a step further, and have a proper manning scale in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee which sat over two years inquiring into this question. Some hon. Members thought it not possible to have a manning scale, but as a practical seaman he thought it was possible, and, as a matter of fact, the vast majority of ships were now all manned on the tonnage system; while as to the firemen's department the vessels were manned according to the amount of coal consumed. But one of the greatest dangers at the present time was not so much the number of men on board as the way in which the men were worked at sea. Another dangerous practice was that the officer of the watch, instead of being on the bridge to look after the vessel and maintain a proper look-out, was called to assist the men at work on the coals. It was absolutely necessary for the officer of the watch to be on the bridge during the whole of the time the vessel was at sea. The Board of Trade would have to do something in this direction. The Bill did not provide for the regulation he suggested, but he recognised that it was a step in the right direction, and for that reason he should support it. He was pleased the right hon. Gentleman had extended the provisions of the Bill to foreign ships in British ports, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman there would be no difficulty in obtaining foreign crews in British ports like Cardiff. He expressed approval of the provision as to representatives of the shipowners and seamen composing a kind of tribunal to consult with the Board of Trade, and advise as to when a ship was seaworthy and unseaworthy. That was a practical suggestion and one which, from the seamen's point of view, would meet with every approval. He trusted the shipowners would be able to approve of it also. He had much pleasure in supporting the Bill, which he hoped would speedily pass into law.

Sir ARTHUR FORWOOD said the remarks of the hon. Member in favour of a manning scale were answered by his own argument, because he told them that, even though a vessel had a considerable number of men on board, at sea these men were improperly employed when they should be upon watch. It was quite clear that, whatever manning scale might have been adopted, it would have had to be followed up by a code of regulations governing the action of the captain and officers of the ships as to the way in which the men were to be employed. The President of the Board of Trade had alluded to certain instructions that would be laid down for the guidance of their officers. Might he venture at this point to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to what the minority of the Committee considered the most important part connected with this question of manning of vessels? It was the maintenance of an efficient watch during the whole time a vessel was at sea, without which other precautions were of no avail. The minority in their Report said:—

> "Every foreign-going vessel shall, when under weigh, at all times and places have a minimum effective watch on duty on deck to secure her safe navigation, and in default of such effective watch the master, owner, or officers in default should be held liable to the

consequences of the failure of duty, and the ship regarded as in default and undermanned."

With regard to the application of the Bill to foreign ships coming to English ports, he expressed the opinion that the President of the Board of Trade would find it impossible to put into force any clause dealing with the question of the manning of foreign ships, and any legislation in this direction would be an invitation to foreign Governments to interfere and impose restrictive and difficult regulations on British ships visiting foreign ports.

*MR. RITCHIE said he did not wish the hon. Member for Middlesbrough to be under any misapprehension. He said that before drawing up these rules they would take care to consult with the shipping industry. The hon. Gentleman rather assumed that they were going to appoint a committee on which not only shipowners but all classes employed on ships would be represented. That was not at all the idea; but he was perfectly certain that, when they invited the cooperation of any shipowner to assist them in the formation of these rules, he would be a shipowner who would command the confidence of all those employed in the ships.

Bill read a Second time, and committed to the Standing Commitee on Trade, Etc.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY (TRANSFER OF PATRONAGE) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[MR. GRANT LAWSON in the Chair.]

Clause 1,—

TRANSFER OF PRESENTATION TO PROFESSORSHIPS.

From and after the *passing of this Act* the right of presentation to the Professorship of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh presently exercised by Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, in right of her Crown, shall be transferred to and in all time coming be exercised by the curators of the said University appointed under the provisions of section thirteen of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858; and the right of presentation to the Professorship of Botany in the said University presently exercised by the said curators shall be transferred to and in all time coming be exercised by Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, in right of her Crown.

Sir Arthur Forwood.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said he did not intend to oppose the Bill, but he should like to know if the Lord Advocate could give them the relative amounts of the Chairs that were transferred.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) said he could not give the exact figures, but the parties concerned considered the bargain a fair one.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 2,—

SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Act 1897.

Clause ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Bill reported without Amendment; read the Third time, and passed.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley) moved, "That the Bill be now read a Second time." He said it was practically the same Measure as was introduced by the late Government in 1895, and not proceeded with for want of time. It was introduced by the present Government last Session, and was again postponed, partly for want of time and partly because the London County Council wished for further time to consider it. One of the provisions of the Bill was to do away with the limit imposed on the salaries of clerks of the police courts by an Act of 1839. That limit had inflicted great injustice on those clerks, because it had kept their salaries at an amount which by common consent was far too low. Departmental Committees had recommended that they should be raised, and the Treasury, though willing, was barred by the old Act. The Bill also proposed to transfer the whole charge of the police courts to the Metropolitan Police Fund. At present the Receiver had charge of the police stations, and the Office of Works of the police courts. This dual management of property and mixed jurisdiction gave rise to much confusion, and it was proposed by the Bill to place the whole of the property of courts and stations under the Receiver. The Bill also proposed to throw the whole charge of maintenance of the courts on the Police Fund, while under the fourth clause, borrowing powers were given in order to carry out certain works in connection with the courts. It was thought inadvisable to lay out much money on leasehold property, and therefore the borrowing powers were given in order that the Receiver in all cases might acquire the freehold of the courts. The expenses entailed by the Bill would be about £6,400, or nearly £200 more than was laid down by the London County Council in 1894, when it was proposed to transfer the police courts. The officials of the Home Office thought that £6,400 would amply repay the deficiency which would be thrown on the Police Fund by this portion of the Bill. The Government were most anxious that the ratepayers should not suffer in any way by this transaction, and had agreed to pay £7,000 per annum into the police fund in respect of the services rendered by the police to the House of Commons. The police employed in the parks, at museums, in dockyards, had always been similarly paid for, but hitherto there had only been a trifling payment of £400 for police services in connection with that House. The sum of £7,000 was not mentioned in the Bill, because it might have to be increased in extra long sessions and slightly diminished in very short ones. There was also a debt of about £8,000 from the Police Fund of the Treasury on account of the Bow-street buildings, and this debt the Treasury had consented to cancel. Altogether the Treasury had been very liberal in regard to the Police Fund, and very careful that no extra burden should be imposed on the ratepayers. The London County Council had issued a memorandum saying that certain districts in the Metropolitan police area, but outside London, were, from their point of view, hardly dealt with by this Bill. But supposing that those districts had to pay the whole of the deficiency of £6,500, the burden upon them would come to just 1-25th of a penny in the pound, so that a man living in a £100 house would pay only 4d. a year on account of this alteration. But when the £7,000 was paid into the Police Fund it would stand in a better position than before, and there would be no financial burden on the ratepayers of any kind. The memorandum went on to speak about the undesirability of placing the administration of a sum of £30,000 in the hands of the Commissioners, the suggestion being that the change would lead to expense. Considering, however, that the Receiver had already the management of a turnover of £2,000,000 a year, it was difficult to understand what disadvantage could accrue from his administration of an additional sum of £30,000. Since 1868 there had been no increase in the police rate, and very few local authorities could say the same thing in regard to the cost of any work intrusted to them. In this memorandum a deficiency of £8,525 was shown, but charges were entered which never could be put on the Police Fund. For instance, an item of £3,500 was entered for pensions, including magistrates' pensions, which were charged on the Consolidated Fund. The memorandum also stated that the Receiver had an accumulation every year of revenue, and had a very large sum in hand. It was true that at certain seasons of the year the Receiver had a very large balance in hand, when the rates came in, but at other times he had hardly any balance at all. The reserve on March 31 was no less than £346,000. In December it was only £5,000, and at some periods of the year the Receiver actually had a deficiency, so that all the talk about his having a large sum permanently in hand fell to the ground. There was only one sum mentioned in the memorandum to which the Police Fund was entitled, and that was to payment for the use of Bow-street Police Court for Imperial purposes. As the Court was used for extradition cases and other purposes by the Government, he was inclined to think the Government should pay something for it, and he had no doubt that if the matter was represented to the Treasury they would make an addition to the £7,000 for that purpose. He understood the Bill was to be opposed on the ground that it would increase the rates, and the hon. Member for Glasgow, he believed, opposed it on the ground that London was treated too well. The hon. Member ought to support the Bill, because from his point of view it was a step in the right direction, seeing it took the expenses of the police courts from the Exchequer and placed them upon the rates. At any rate, the ratepayers in the County of London and in the Metropolitan police area would not lose by the bargain.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) rose to move the rejection of the Bill. He hoped the House would not be misled by the ingenious sophistries of the right hon. Gentleman. This was not a Party question, for indeed, in matters affecting the metropolis, London Members never held themselves bound by party considerations. [*Ironical cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman used an expression which was distinctly misleading. He said this was a proposal to transfer a charge from the Police Fund. But what was the Police Fund? The fund was supplied by rates drawn from the pockets of the ratepayers, and therefore this was a proposal to transfer a charge from the Exchequer to the ratepayers, not of London alone, but of the great area which was called the Metropolitan Police District. Now, when they transferred a charge, it followed that they should also transfer the control, but in this case they were transferring a charge without giving the ratepayers any more control than they possessed now; indeed, they would have rather less control, because the First Commissioner of Works was in this House, whereas the Receiver of the Metropolitan Police was not. London Members contended that London was unfairly treated in regard to Imperial grants, and it was not just that before that question had been decided or considered by the Royal Commission an additional charge should be put upon the ratepayers. At all events this stood out very prominently in the right hon. Gentleman's statement that an additional charge was to be laid by the Bill upon the ratepayers of the Metropolitan Police District. It was impossible to estimate even approximately the additional charge which the Bill would lay upon those ratepayers. As the right hon. Gentleman said, at the present moment the charges were very materially restricted by statute, and the restrictions the Bill proposed to remove. There was a Statute which limited the salary of the chief clerk of each Metropolitan police court to £500, and that of the second clerk to £300. Those salaries were inadequate, but that fact only strengthened his argument that the additional charge which would be involved by removing the statutory bar would be a very large charge. He believed it would ultimately, if not immediately, be a charge of something between £10,000 and £15,000 a year. There was another statutory bar. At present the borrowing powers for buildings in respect of these courts was £500,000; this Bill proposed to give additional borrowing powers to the extent of £200,000, and the right hon. Gentleman himself clearly showed that the Government had in view a very large expenditure upon buildings and upon the enfranchisement of leaseholders. How was the money to be provided? The inequity would be very great as regarded the districts surrounding the metropolis—as regarded large parts of Surrey, Kent, and other metropolitan counties. The right hon. Gentleman made a merit of the fact that during the last few years the Metropolitan Police Rate had not been raised. It had not been raised for the reason that at the beginning of the period to which the right hon. Gentleman referred it was at its statutory maximum. As a matter of fact the effect of a recent Act was practically to allow the rate to be raised. The old Acts limited it to 9d. in the pound, but the Metropolitan Police Act of 1890 provided that even where, as in London, the police rate was fixed, an extra rate might be levied in order to supply the deficit in the Superannuation Act. The effect was that the 9d. limit no longer existed. The extra charge would be levied on all the people living within 15 miles of Charing Cross, so that a large number of persons would be called upon to pay towards an expenditure the benefit of which was enjoyed by only a portion of the inhabitants.

The HON. MEMBER was speaking at midnight, when the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

VOLUNTEERS BILL.

On the order for Committee,

*MR. SPEAKER ruled that the following Instruction, standing in the name of Mr. Pickersgill, was invalid on the ground that its object could be attained by an Amendment:

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions regulating and restricting imprisonment in default of payment of the fines to which the Bill relates."

Bill considered in Committee.

Clause 1:—

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPPLY [30TH APRIL].

Resolutions reported.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I object.

CIVIL SERVICES, 1897-8.

CLASS III.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £43,177, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries of the Law Officers' Department; the salaries and expenses of the Department of the Solicitor for the Affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury, Queen's Proctor, and Director of Public Prosecutions; the costs of prosecutions, of other legal proceedings, and of Parliamentary agency."

DR. TANNER: I object.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member not to interrupt the business of the House in that manner. He cannot object to Report of Supply.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £22,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for certain miscellaneous legal expenses."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £204,451, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for such of the salaries and expenses of the Supreme Court of Judicature as are not charged on the Consolidated Fund."

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £5,177, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries and expenses of the Office of the Land Registry."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £23,071, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries and expenses connected with the County Courts."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £3,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries and expenses of the Police Courts of London and Sheerness."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £41,107, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the pay and expenses of Officers of Metropolitan Police employed on special duties, and the salaries and expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary."

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £420,851, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the expenses of the Prisons in England, Wales and the Colonies."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £126,130, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the expense of the maintenance of juvenile offenders in Reformatory, Industrial and Day Industrial Schools in Great Britain, and of the Inspectors of Reformatories."

10. "That a sum, not exceeding £21,954, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the maintenance of criminal lunatics in the Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum."

11. "That a sum, not exceeding £62,630, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries and expenses of the Lord Advocate's Department, and other law charges and the salaries and expenses of the Courts of Law and Justice in Scotland."

12. "That a sum, not exceeding £28,961, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the salaries and expenses of the Offices in Her Majesty's General Register House, Edinburgh."

13. "That a sum, not exceeding £3,350, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the expenses of the Establishment of the Crofters' Commission."

14. "That a sum, not exceeding £52,277, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1898, for the expenses of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, and of the prisons under their control, including the maintenance of criminal lunatics and the preparation of judicial statistics."

Resolutions agreed to.

APPEAL IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

BICYCLES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

FOREIGN PRISON MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned till Thursday.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES' JURISDICTION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday 17th May.

BURIAL GROUNDS LOANS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Third Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

WAREHOUSEMEN'S CERTIFICATES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 1st June.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 30th June.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

MIDWIVES' REGISTRATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 11th May.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 10th June.

TITHE REDEMPTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

SALE OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 3rd June.

HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

CHAFF-CUTTING MACHINES ACCIDENTS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (SCOTLAND) LOANS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

SERVICE FRANCHISE BILL.

On the Order for Committee being read,

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) rose to move:—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to confer the franchise upon persons occupying as tenants compartments similar to those mentioned in the Bill."

***MR. SPEAKER** said the Bill related to the Service Franchise only, whilst the Instruction proposed to alter another franchise, and it was therefore outside the scope of the Bill.

Bill considered in Committee:—

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) moved to report progress.

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich) appealed to the hon. Member to withdraw his objection, as the Bill was of a non-contentious character.

Mr. KNOX said that as his Instruction had been ruled out of order, the Bill could not be said to be non-contentious, and he thought it would be impossible for the hon. Member to get it through.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Wednesday, 30th June.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Thursday.

POLICE PENSIONS AND SERVICE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

MERSEY CHANNELS BILL.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

VERMINOUS PERSONS BILL.

Committee deferred till Friday, 14th May.

COUNTY COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 28th May.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 11th May.

MILITIA BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 26th May.

CANALS PROTECTION (LONDON) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday.

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

BURIAL GROUNDS.

Select Committee appointed to inquire into the subject of Burial Grounds provided by local authorities under the Public Health (Interments) Act, 1879, and other Acts; to inquire whether any alterations in the existing law are necessary, especially in regard to the consecration of the ground, the provision of chapels, the allocation of fees, and the appointment of chaplain; and to report thereon.—(*Mr. J. W. Sidebotham.*)

MOTION.

EXTRAORDINARY TITHE.

Bill to remove doubts arising under the Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act 1886, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Attorney General; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 214.]

House Adjourned at a Quarter after Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 4th May 1897.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY (TRANSFER OF PATRONAGE) BILL.

Brought from the Commons, Read 1ª, and to be printed.—[No. 64.]

LAND TRANSFER BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with amendments; the Report thereof to be received on Friday next; and Bill to be printed as amended.—[No. 62.]

SUNDAY BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend an Act passed in 1781 for preventing certain abuses and profanations on the Lord's Day called Sunday—Was presented by Lord Hobhouse— Read 1ª; and to be printed.—[No. 63.]

House Adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Five o'Clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter past Ten o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 4th May 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

IMPROVED HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION (COASTS OF SCOTLAND).

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): To call attention to the urgent need for Improved Harbour Accommodation for fishermen on the coasts of Scotland; and to move, "That, looking to the dangers now arising to the lives and property of fishermen from insufficient harbour accommodation, and looking to the admitted inadequacy of the present grant for fishery harbours, Her Majesty's Government should assign to the Scottish Fishery Board public funds sufficient to meet this need, and should readjust the financial relations between the Treasury and the Scottish fishing industry on a basis not less favourable than that existing at the beginning of the century."—[*Tuesday, 1st June.*]

MINING ROYALTIES.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): To call attention to the subject of Mining Royalties, and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 1st June.*]

EDUCATION (WALES).

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To call attention to the subject of Welsh Education, and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday, 1st June.*]

QUESTIONS.

WARDEN ESTATE (SNEEM, CO. KERRY).

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) how many tenants on the Warden Estate at Sneem, in the County of Kerry, have lost their rights under the Land Acts through proceedings instituted against them for arrears of rent; (2) whether he is aware that an eviction decree was obtained at the late Kerry Assizes against a tenant on the Warden property named O'Sullivan because he gave shelter to an evicted tenant named Neill, that this is the third time that Neill has been evicted, and that the poor rates in the division have been raised 30 per cent. owing to the large number of evictions; (3) whether his attention has been directed to the result of the late election of a Poor Law Guardian for the district, in which Mr. Warden was defeated by 98 votes to 19; and (4) whether, in view of the serious condition of the district, the Irish Government will remonstrate with Mr. Warden with regard to the treatment of his tenants?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): The Government has no information on the subject of the first paragraph, and no effective means of obtaining it. It is the fact that an eviction decree was recently obtained against O'Sullivan, but according to the information before me, every other statement in the second and third paragraphs is inaccurate. The decree was not obtained because O'Sullivan gave shelter to an evicted tenant named O'Neill. O'Neill has been evicted once only—namely, in July 1894, when he owed six years' rent; the poor rate has not been raised 30 per cent. in the division, but has remained the same during the past three years. Mr. Warden was not a candidate at the recent election for Poor Law Guardian. With regard to the last paragraph, I have nothing to add to what I stated on the 11th March, in answer to a previous Question of the hon. Member.

CONSTABULARY (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr, J. G. WEIR), I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the constable recently stationed at Applecross, Ross-shire, is occupied almost exclusively in performing the duties of a gamekeeper; and whether, in view of the fact that the appointment of this constable throws an extra burden on the rates which the crofters, cottars, and fishermen of the district can ill afford, he will consider the advisability of suggesting to the Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland that no new appointment of this character should be made, but that owners of deer forests should, at their own cost, provide any protection for deer which they consider necessary?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed that this constable is never employed as a gamekeeper. His appointment was sanctioned by the late Secretary for Scotland, in May 1895, on the recommendation of the Standing Joint Committee of the County and the County Council.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, having regard to the fact that the average cost of the withdrawal of money from the Post Office Savings Bank by telegraph, is upwards of 1s. for each withdrawal, and that three-fourths of the withdrawals by this means are estimated by the Post Office to be made by the working classes, he will consider the expediency of placing at their disposal a mode of withdrawal less costly than that of withdrawal by telegraph, and more expeditious than withdrawal by ordinary post?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The average cost of withdrawal by telegraph is not upwards of 1s., but much less than 1s., except where a telegram has to be sent both by the depositor and the Department in London. If the depositor only requires the payment to be made next day only one telegram is necessary. For all but cases of urgent need, which are of rare occurrence, this is sufficient and satisfies the depositors. The hon. Member mentions that three-fourths of the telegraphic withdrawals are made by depositors of the working class. I may add that three-fourths of all depositors are of that class, so that there is nothing to show that they, in proportion to others, make a greater use of the telegraph for withdrawing money. The Postmaster General does not think it necessary or expedient to take such a course as the hon. Member indicates, and he desires to state again, as has been stated in this House on February 21 1896, and on the 6th ult., that the Post Office Savings Bank was established for the encouragement of thrift, and not for the purpose of performing the functions of an ordinary bank.

LOAN FUND SOCIETIES (IRELAND).

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he has received a copy of a Resolution passed by the Lisbellaw Loan Fund Board relating to the Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the administration of the Loan Fund Acts in Ireland; and (2) whether he can state whether the Appendix to the said Report, containing the evidence given before the said Commission, has yet been published; and, if so, when the same will be available for the use of Members?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have seen the Resolution referred to in the first paragraph. The transcript of the evidence taken at the various inquiries held by the Committee has not been printed. The evidence was very fully reported in local newspapers, and, in view of the elaborate character of the Report of the Committee already presented to Parliament, and of the voluminous nature of the evidence taken at the inquiries, it is not considered necessary to lay the latter on the Table of the House.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say that adequate provision will be made for the representation of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force in Her Most Gracious Majesty's Jubilee Procession?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I regret I am not yet able to make an announcement in answer to this Question.

MR. GERALD LODER (Brighton): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with a view of allowing managers of elementary schools to give children an extra week's holiday in commemoration of Her Majesty's long reign, he will take steps so far to modify Article 83 of the Code of Regulations as to make the minimum number of times which a school must be opened for the present year 390 instead of 400?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): I do not think any modification of the Article is desirable. The Education Department already have power under the Code to deal with exceptional cases, if necessary.

MR. J. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in connection with the National rejoicing and thanksgiving for Her Majesty's long and auspicious reign, he will advise the extension of the Royal clemency to first offenders and other prisoners undergoing terms of imprisonment for minor offences in Great Britain and Ireland?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I do not think it would be consistent with my public duty to tender such advice to Her Majesty as the hon. Member suggests. Even if I could approve his proposal in principle, I still foresee very great difficulties attaching to any method of giving effect to it.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can state when the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland (Part I.) will be published?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: Part I. of the Report was laid upon the Table of the House on Friday last, and will be circulated as soon as possible.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (SCOTLAND).

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether arrangements will be made that in future Reports of the Local Government Board for Scotland the reports of medical officers of health shall be dated?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: If the hon. Member will refer to page 48 of the Board's Report he will see that the extracts are headed "Extracts from Reports for 1895." The Medical Officers' Reports are all made for the calendar year and must be submitted not later than the 31st March of the year following.

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he can state the amount of expenses incurred by local authorities and railway and other companies in promoting and opposing Private Bills before Parliament, from 1892 to 1895, both inclusive, for England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales (including Monmouthshire), respectively; (2) whether, before the Measure named in the Queen's Speech for amending the existing procedure with respect to Private Bills coming from Scotland and Ireland is submitted to the House, he will give a Return in continuation of Parliamentary Papers, No. 356 of Session 1892, and No. 98 of Session 1893-4; and (3) whether, in the Bill to be introduced, the Government will consider the advisability of making its provisions applicable to Bills coming from Wales?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member this information; nor do I see my way clear to granting the Return he asks for, having regard to the very great labour which its preparation would involve and to the fact that there is no reason for supposing that there has been any material change in the circumstances since the last Return was granted. As regards the last paragraph of his Question, I must refer him to the Leader of the House.

FOOD SUPPLIES (UNITED KINGDOM).

MR. H. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, in view of the acceptance by the Government of the Motion of 6th April last on the subject of our national food supplies in the event of war, whether he will ascertain, either by means of a Departmental Committee of Naval Officers or otherwise from naval experts, what number of cruisers will be required to adequately protect our ocean trade routes in the event of a war with one or more maritime Powers; and whether the result of such Inquiry, with full particulars, can be communicated to Parliament?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Resolution in question has introduced no new feature whatever so far as the Admiralty is concerned. The hon. Member must think the Admiralty very remiss in their duty if he supposed they have not considered, and considered in detail, the number of cruisers required to protect our ocean trade routes in time of war, and their distribution. [*Cheers.*] Every spot where cruisers ought to be placed has been the subject of careful thought. It is, of course, one of the chief preoccupations of the First Naval Lord, but it is quite out of the question to make public in any way the proposed strategical disposition of our naval forces. [*Cheers.*]

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (SCOTLAND).

SIR T. GIBSON-CARMICHAEL (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been drawn to the dissatisfaction felt in many parts of Scotland at the fact that certain Chairmen of Parish Councils, who have on former occasions qualified as Justices of the Peace, have been required on re-election to their office to again take oaths and again pay fees before again acting as Justices of the Peace; whether he is aware that Chairmen of District Councils in England in an analogous position are, under Statutes 59 and 60 Vict. c. 22, enabled to continue to act as Justices of the Peace without again taking the oath; and whether Her Majesty's Government would be willing to give facilities for legislation to remove this source of dissatisfaction?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: My attention has been drawn to the anomaly to which the hon. Member refers, and which an Act of last Session remedied for Chairmen of District Councils in England. Facilities for legislation will be given when possible, but I fear I can give no undertaking for the present Session.

FOREIGN LOTTERIES.

MR. EVELYN HUBBARD (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that large parcels of circulars, inviting subscriptions to lotteries, are sent over from Hamburg and other Continental ports by steamer; and that these circulars are then sent out through some post office in this country bearing the official stamp "Paid," in lieu of postage stamp; and whether, inasmuch as this practice would be illegal if the lottery referred to were held in England, the Postmaster General will consider the advisability of discontinuing this advertisement of foreign lotteries?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware to what extent circulars relating to lotteries are sent over from Hamburg and other Continental ports to this country by private agency for posting here, but his attention has been on previous occasions called to the fact that such circulars have been among the packets for which in London and certain large towns payment in money may be accepted instead of in stamps, and which are thereupon impressed with the "Paid" stamp. As the circulars in question are in sealed covers and have all the appearance of ordinary letters, he cannot have cognisance of their nature and refuse them transmission as he could do if they were in open packets.

POSTMEN (BOLTON).

MR. G. HARWOOD (Bolton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that in the Bolton Post Office a certain number of postmen, who likewise deliver letters within the town limits, are classed as rural, and therefore receive 2s. per week less wages than the corresponding town postmen, simply because they have to pass beyond the town limits, even though they have to give two attendances daily, returning to the head office after each delivery, and have also to carry the same weight as town postmen; if he is aware that when such postmen are transferred to a town walk they have to enter at the foot of the town class, and so, though they may have been many years in the service of the Post Office, are made to rank below those who have only just entered it; and if steps will be taken to abolish this distinction?

MR. HANBURY: The wages of the postmen named in the Question and of the town postmen at Bolton are the same, except that the maximum of the town postmen is 2s. per week higher. The duties of the postmen in question were in 1894 considered to be lighter, and their attendances shorter than those of their colleagues employed exclusively in the town. Inquiry shall be made to ascertain whether the circumstances have since changed. The transference of a rural postman to town duties does not involve, as the Question appears to imply, any loss of wages. He continues to receive the increments already earned, and has the advantage of rising to a higher maximum. He ranks at the foot of his new class only as regards choice of time of leave and other privileges, which it is only fair not to take away from men who are already enjoying them.

AUTUMN MANŒUVRES (SCOTLAND).

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for War if it is the case that the Autumn Manœuvres have been abandoned, and, as arrangements have been made at great expense to bring two battalions of Scotch Militia to participate in these, will he now countermand these orders, seeing that brigading with regulars can be arranged in Scotland, and thus economy as well as efficiency secured; whether, if there is a musketry instructor in Scotland as well as at Aldershot, efficient instruction might be obtained at Lanark; and, if not, will he explain the reason; could he state what is now the special object in bringing two battalions of Militia from Scotland, and is he aware that the time now fixed for doing so is contemporaneous with the time fixed for the training of the 4th Battalion of one of the same regiments at Lanark, and that the staff is not sufficiently complete to admit of splitting the battalions, seeing that there is only one band, one piper band, and one quartermaster for the two battalions; if it is intended to utilise these two battalions of Scotch Militia during the Jubilee celebrations; and if he is aware that neither has a complete full-dress uniform, not having shakos but only forage caps?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It is not proposed to make any change in the arrangements contemplated for this year's training of the Militia. There is great advantage in occasionally brigading Militia with Regular troops, and this could not be done at Lanark. These battalions are to be brought to Aldershot in order to assemble there the four battalions of the 16th Militia Brigade, of which they form part. The two Militia battalions of the Scottish Rifles and the two of the Highland Light Infantry have always been considered as separate units, and have a staff sufficient to act accordingly. It has not yet been decided which Militia battalions will attend the Jubilee celebration; but it is known that these battalions are without full-dress head-dress.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (DANISH WATERS).

MR. CALDWELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the fact that it is the practice in the case of illegal trawling in Danish waters to punish the offenders not only by a substantial fine but also by confiscation of the trawler's gear, will he consider the expediency of taking such steps as will admit of a similar course being adopted in the case of illegal trawling off the coasts of Scotland?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The hon. Member appears to be unaware of the fact that the existing law, contained in the Herring Fishery (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1890, already provides for confiscation of nets upon conviction of illegal trawling.

POSTMEN (PONTYPRIDD).

MR. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why postmen of Pontypridd, performing similar duties to postmen in Swansea and Newport, are paid 4s. per week less than those employed in the towns named; and whether he will take into consideration the case of the postmen of Pontypridd with a view of placing them upon an equality of treatment with the postmen of Swansea and Newport?

MR. HANBURY: The reason why the maximum wages of postmen are higher at Swansea and Newport than at Pontypridd is that the two first mentioned towns are much larger, and this distinction is in accordance with the general rule of the Service under which the higher scales of wages are allocated to the large provincial towns. They start at the same wage of 18s. in all these three towns. It does not appear that any application respecting their wages has reached this Office from the postmen at Pontypridd through the regular official channel. Such an application would, of course, be duly considered.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

MR. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any request has been made to Her Majesty's Government for the granting of a charter to any person or group of persons for the purpose of acquiring any portion of the colony of British Columbia; if so, whether he will state for or on behalf of whom this request was made?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): No such request has been made to Her Majesty's Government.

CRETE.

MR. G. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether at present there are practically no law courts, no council, and no gendarmes in Crete, and the whole island is governed by Military law; what further steps have been taken by the Government for securing self-government to the Cretans, and whether such self-government has been approved by the Christians in Crete; and whether food is becoming exhausted in the country, and desperation will probably result; and, if so, what action is advised by the Government to avert such consequences.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): In that portion of the island which is in occupation by the Great Powers, the Turkish Authorities are still carrying on the administration with the old Gendarmerie. The Cretan Council has, of course, since the disturbance began ceased to meet. In the interior of the island no regular administration, so far as we know, exists. Her Majesty's Government have no means of taking separately any steps for the organisation of the autonomy which it is intended to grant to Crete. The Great Powers intend to carry the project into effect, but the continued presence of the Greek troops and the consequent attitude of the Christian Cretans render progress in this respect very difficult. As regards food supplies, there appears to be no lack of provisions in the interior, where the Christians, in addition to their own crops, have the disposal of the crops of the evicted Mussulmans. It is only on the coast, where great masses of Cretan Mahomedans are gathered together, that there is any serious fear of destitution.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

*MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can state the result of the negotiations between the Postmaster General and the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland on the subject of an improved limited mail service to Cavan and Belturbet?

MR. HANBURY: As was stated in reply to a similar Question from the hon. Member on the 27th ultimo, the railway company state that they are unable to alter the hours of the Day Mail Train from Dundalk so as to give to Cavan, Belturbet and the district generally the improved service desired, except upon terms which the Postmaster General would not be justified in accepting.

*MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any, and if so what, reply has been received from the Midland Great Western Railway Company on the question of giving a third class carriage on the limited mail trains on their system?

MR. HANBURY: In a reply which has been received to-day from the Midland Great Western Railway Company, it is stated that 3rd class passengers will, from the 1st June, be conveyed by the day mail trains on their line, but that the arrangement will be confined to passengers booked through to and from England.

*MR. FARRELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman use his good offices to have this privilege extended to passengers between Irish stations?

MR. HANBURY: I do not think I can, because, I think, the railway company will not go further at present.

CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

*MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can now state whether the Government will give facilities for the passage of the Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill at present before the House?

MR. HANBURY: A Report was received yesterday from the Board of Works on this Bill, so far as it might affect canals and navigations in their charge. This Report will be at once communicated to the Board of Trade, within whose province the matter lies.

TURKO-GREEK WAR.

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any proposal has been made by the Government for a conference of representatives of the Great Powers to discuss the present relations between Turkey and Greece; and if so, could he state what was the date of the proposal; and whether there is any immediate prospect of this or any other step being taken by the Powers with a view to the improvement of the present position of affairs?

MR. CURZON: Communications are passing between the Great Powers; but it is impossible at present to make any statement as to their character. There is an earnest desire on the part of the Powers to bring about a termination of the war, but it must be obvious that the first essential for successful mediation is that the belligerents should give evidence of their willingness to accept it.

MR. DALZIEL asked whether he was to understand that the right hon. Gentleman refused to answer the terms of his Question?

MR. CURZON: Yes, Sir. The hon. Gentleman can interpret my answer in no other way. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

AUXILIARY POSTMEN (IRELAND).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he can state if auxiliary rural postmen in Ireland will be entitled under the new arrangements to summer uniforms, and when will those uniforms be distributed; are any rural postmen at the present time performing five hours per day duty; and, when will the increased pay of 15s. per week come into operation in those cases?

MR. HANBURY: Auxiliary rural postmen in Ireland doing five hours' work or more a day will be entitled to summer uniform. It is feared that it will not be practicable to make the distribution of such uniform to them this year. The new arrangements apply to the whole of the United Kingdom, and the preparation of the contracts and the making of the uniforms will necessarily occupy a considerable time. There are rural postmen at the present time performing five hours per day duty. The increased pay of 15s. a week is to be given to postmen doing a full day's work. It will date from the 1st April last, and will be allotted as speedily as possible.

MONAGHAN UNION.

Mr. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland upon what ground the Chief Land Commission selected Messrs. Thompson and M'Kenzie to act as appeal valuers in the Monaghan Union, since these gentlemen have had no experience and can have but little knowledge of tillage farming in Ulster; and, will the Chief Land Commission recall these valuers, and appoint in their stead others conversant with the difficulties small farmers in the Monaghan Union have to contend against?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The selection of appeal valuers is a matter entirely within the discretion of the Land Commissioners, and is not one in which the Irish Government can take any action.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, how much of the immediate additional expenditure on the Post Office Department of £135,000, and of the ultimate increased cost of £275,000, will be received by the London inspectors of postmen, the provincial inspectors of postmen, the London sorters, the provincial sorting clerks, and the London overseers, head postmen, bagmen, lobby officers, and telegraph linemen?

The hon. Member also asked the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, how much of the £150,000, which he informed the House the other day would eventually go to the postmen as the result of the adoption of the recommendations by the Tweedmouth Committee, will fall to the lot of the poorest paid class, the rural postman?

Mr. HANBURY: In reply to the two Questions of the hon. Member, the Postmaster General does not consider that it would be right to furnish minute details of the proportionate cost of applying the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee to the several classes of Post Office servants who will be benefited, and he must therefore decline to give the particulars asked for. With regard, however, to one part of the hon. Member's Question, the Postmaster General feels bound to demur to the reference to the rural postmen as the poorest paid class of Post Office servants.

BETTING MESSAGES.

Mr. R. ASCROFT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is correct that on the occasion of large race meetings preference is given at the telegraph offices to racing and betting messages over ordinary business messages, and whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to same with a view to such course being at once abandoned?

Mr. HANBURY: As far as the Postmaster General is aware, it is not correct that on the occasion of large race meetings preference is given at the telegraph offices to racing and betting messages over ordinary business messages; but if the hon. Member will furnish him with any information which leads him to think that such a practice exists, he will be glad to cause inquiries to be made in the matter. The officers of the Department are strictly forbidden to give any favour or priority of transmission, and any officer wilfully delaying the transmission of a telegram is liable to severe penalties.

CANADIAN MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the provisional contract made with Messrs. Peterson, Tait and Company for the Canadian Mail Service contains the same provision as that previously entered into with Messrs. Allan, by which the Canadian Government might require the ships to stop at an Irish port of call; and whether, having regard to the long established custom under which the Canadian mail steamers call at the port of Derry, and to the close connection and large passenger service between Ulster and Canada, he will endeavour to secure, before assenting to a grant in aid out of British and Irish revenue, that the new steamers shall call at Lough Foyle, provided the improvements necessary for the prompt dispatch of the mails are made by the postal authorities and railway companies?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Question of the contract for the Canadian

Mail Service is still under consideration; but Her Majesty's Government have stipulated that, if required, the vessels performing the Service should call both ways *en route* at an Irish port.

BOARD OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education what is the result of the communications between the Science and Art Department and the Board of Intermediate Education for Ireland, relating to the rule under which the Board's result fees have been treated as endowments and deducted from the fees payable by the Department; whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Board for 1896, wherein the amounts of result fees paid to each school out of the original endowment and out of the local taxation (Customs and Excise) grant are separately set out, showing that less than one-sixth is derived from the endowment; and whether, under the circumstances, the Science and Art Department will revise their rule and give retrospective effect to the revision, so as to secure equal treatment in this respect to Irish and English schools?

SIR J. GORST: As it appears that the Board of Intermediate Education are able to specify the portion of result fees which is paid out of the local taxation grant, that portion will not, for the future, be treated as endowment by the Science and Art Department.

TEACHERS' PENSION FUND (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the Report of the Committee on the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund will be published; and whether the Committee considered the question of the desirability of making compassionate grants of the same kind as were made out of the Estimates before the Pension Fund was established?

MR. HANBURY: The Report of the Committee and the Treasury Minute upon it were presented yesterday. Up to the Act of 1879 compassionate grants were made out of the Estimates to two sets of teachers—those who retired on account of age and long service and those who broke down in health at an earlier age. From 1879 pensions have, as a rule, taken the place of gratuities in the case of retirement from age or long service, and gratuities have been reserved for cases of retirement from ill health. Both the pensions and the gratuities have been charged on the Teachers' Pension Fund. A few teachers, however, who did not come within the terms of the Act, have received gratuities instead of pensions on retirement for age or long service; and the charge for these is still borne on the Estimates, and will continue to be so borne. The Committee considered the question mentioned by the hon. Member so far as regards the existing gratuities on retirement by reason of ill-health, and recommended a modification of the system which will be found in Paragraph 10 of the Report.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate when he will be able to state the sum of money which he will propose to be applied for educational purposes in Scotland, the basis on which it is to be calculated, and the method in which it is to be applied for those purposes?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I hope to be able in the course of next week to move a Resolution for the introduction of a Bill relating to education in Scotland, and will take that opportunity to deal with the matter referred to in the Question.

POSTAL REFORM.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he could give the probable date when the valuable postal reforms promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be brought into operation? ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. HANBURY: The extension of rural post deliveries must be a work of time, and the reduction of the foreign and colonial rate must depend upon the decision of the Postal Union Congress, and in any case could not be brought into operation until 1898. The Postmaster General hopes to bring the other changes into operation on Jubilee Day. [*Cheers.*]

EARTHQUAKE (WEST INDIES).

MR. J. WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) asked whether the Secretary for the

Colonies had any information as to the earthquake in the West Indies?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I observed in the newspapers statements that an earthquake had taken place in the West Indies, and that there was some serious loss both of life and property in some of the English islands. I telegraphed to the Governor and I have received the following reply:—"In answer to telegram of May 3, no reports of casualties in the colony"—that refers to the whole of the Leeward Islands—"but loss of life and property in Guadeloupe," which is one of the French islands.

MOTIONS.

FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the law relating to Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Dane, and Mr. Roche; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 216.]

JURORS' EXPENSES.

Bill to provide for the payment of the expenses of Jurors attending Assizes and Quarter Sessions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Hutton, and Mr. Howell; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 19th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 217.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

HABITUAL OFFENDERS AND ADULT REFORMATORIES.

*SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) rose to move:—

> "That, in view of the increasing ratio of habitual offenders and misdemeanants in our prison population, the inadequacy of the existing law to deter or reform them, the cost involved in their repeated imprisonments, and their demoralising influence upon the community, this House considers the institution of adult reformatories for their special treatment, as recommended by the recent Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders (Scotland), to be a matter deserving the early attention of Her Majesty's Government."

He said that the existence of a mass of petty criminals in the community was a source of great demoralisation and danger, for it was from the ranks of these petty misdemeanants and offenders that the army of more desperate crime was constantly recruited. This subject had attracted the attention of the departments concerned with the administration of the law, and in 1894 two departmental Committees were appointed to investigate the subject, one by the then Home Secretary, of which the right hon. Member for West Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) was Chairman, and the other by the Secretary for Scotland, Sir George Trevelyan, over which he himself had the honour to preside. The English Committee was directed to inquire into a number of matters of prison administration in England, and among them was the question of the prison discipline of habitual criminals, while the Scotch Committee had its attention directed primarily to the question of the alleged increase of habitual offenders, vagrants, beggars and inebriates in Scotland, and the inadequacy of the existing law for dealing with them, and was invited to make suggestions for reforms calculated to deal with the evil. The result of this Scotch Committee's investigations showed that there had been an increase in the number of habitual offenders within the five years preceding the Committee's appointment, the years 1889 to 1894—as indicated by the number of persons sent to prison ten times and upwards in one year. The number had increased by 14 per cent. There appeared to have been an even larger increase of habitual criminals in England, and as showing the futility of the present system for reclaiming offenders, the English Committee summed up the result of the 1893 figures in a table, from which it appeared that of persons committed for the first time 30 per cent. returned to prison, for the second time 48 per cent. returned to prison, for the third time 64 per cent., for the fourth time 71 per cent., and for the fifth time 79 per cent. On the strength of these facts the English Committee declared that when a prisoner passed into the habitual class, prison life, subject to the sentences now given, lost its terrors as familiarity with it increased, and that such sentences on old criminals and on persons habitually drunk and disorderly were almost altogether ineffective. The laws and administration in Scotland were different, but the Scotch Committee came to precisely the same conclusion as to the utter inadequacy of the present system to deal with the evil. They said:—

> "One result of the diversity of the law regarding petty offences in Scotland, and the still greater diversity in the method of police administration, is that it affords an exceptional opportunity of judging as to the comparative efficacy of a number of different systems for the repression of the class of offences with which we are called upon to deal. It was therefore most significant that with one accord the witnesses connected with the administration of the law and police throughout Scotland testified as to the utter inadequacy of any of the systems adopted to cope with the evil of the habitual offender."

While these two Committees, working independently of each other, arrived at the same conclusion as to the increase of offenders and the inadequacy of existing methods to deal with or reform them, what was more hopeful was that both Committees were agreed at all events as to the principle of the remedy that was to be applied. Both recommended the establishment of adult reformatories. The English Committee made rather more complex recommendations than the Scotch. They proposed the institution of a Government penal reformatory, and that the Court should have power to commit to this reformatory offenders above 16 and under 23 for periods of not less than one year and up to three years, and that the Secretary of State should have power to transfer prisoners under 23 from prisons to the penal reformatory if satisfied that the treatment there would be more suitable. Referring to the large class of habitual criminals not of the desperate order, who live by robbery and thieving and petty larceny, and who run the risk of short sentences with comparative indifference, they suggested that a new form of sentence should be placed at the disposal of the Judges, by which these offenders might be segregated for long periods of detention, during which they would not be treated with the severity of first-class hard labour or penal servitude, but would be forced to work under less onerous conditions. They further suggested that prisoners sentenced primarily for drunkenness should be specially treated in prisons or parts of prisons set apart for them. The Scotch Committee also suggested adult reformatories, or, as they preferred to call them, "labour settlements," as the best means for solving this question. It appeared to him that their plan was simpler than the other, while it embraced all the recommendations and requirements made by the English Committee. Their proposal was the institution of labour settlements, where habitual offenders and petty criminals could be subjected to prolonged detention, put to productive labour, so that as far as possible they might become self-supporting, and have inculcated habits of industry and self-reliance, and from which they could get licensed so as to get accustomed to liberty before their final liberation. The Committee also suggested that in these settlements the persons detained should be afforded the opportunity of earning a gratuity for work on a more liberal scale than existed in the prisons, with the view of enabling them to earn sufficient money with which they might emigrate or go to another part of the country where they might obtain a fresh start in life. In these settlements the most complete system of classification of inmates could be carried out. The younger could be separated from the older, and as to those offenders in whose case drunkenness formed the primary factor, they would be subjected to treatment calculated in the highest degree to break their habit. They might under the system of classification be dealt with separately, but, in any case, they would be under medical supervision, they would be employed in the open air, and trained in the habits of abstinence, industry, and discipline, and he thought they would thus be placed in a better position for the ultimate repression of the drink habit than if they were shut up in a prison engaged in indoor work. The Scotch plan, therefore, seemed to cover all the suggestions of the English Committee, and he had ventured to bring it before the House, because the recommendations were due to a Committee which included amongst its members a gentleman so thoroughly conversant with the whole system of prison administration in England and Scotland as Colonel M'Hardy, the present Chief Commissioner for Prisons in Scotland. The Scotch Committee worked out their scheme in great detail. They thought it could be carried out at almost no expense to the National Exchequer, and with the hope of bringing about a large ultimate saving. What commended it to him was that it was not punitive but reformatory. ["Hear, hear!"] They surrounded their proposal with safeguards which, he thought, would render it impossible that any but incorrigibles could come within its scope. There appeared in Scotland to be more urgent necessity for facing this problem than in England. In Scotland the local authorities were most anxious that something should be done, for in every town apparently there were a hundred or more habitual offenders who gave the police considerable trouble. In proportion to the population the number of persons annually imprisoned in Scotland was nearly 2½ times as large as the corresponding number in England. Whilst here a proportion of 5½ persons to 1,000 of the population went to prison every year, the proportion in Scotland was 12 to 1,000 of the population. This must not be taken as indicating greater depravity on the part of the Scotch people. The ratio of convicts sent to penal servitude was practically the same in both countries. The ratio of persons convicted on indictment was slightly in excess to what it was in England, but that was due to no more than the system of public prosecution which universally prevailed north of the Tweed. The difference in numbers arose from the cases dealt with summarily in Scotland—those of drunkenness, breach of the peace, assault, petty theft, vagrancy, begging, and solicitation. Such cases were prosecuted by the Procurator Fiscal, and the greater number were dealt with under local Police Acts, which were more stringent than the Police Acts in England. The comparatively trivial nature of Scottish crime was shown by the fact that the average sentence in Scotland was barely half as much as in England. In 1891, of the 48,000 persons imprisoned in Scottish prisons, 33,000 were cases of drunkenness, breach of the peace, and petty assaults. It was curious, and it was a fact not known to those who had not studied the habits of habitual drunkards, that the number of habitual drunkards, pure and simple, that came before the Police Courts was comparatively small. The Committee, in making their proposal, did not make any special recommendation as to the treatment of habitual drunkards. They thought that no better treatment for them could be devised than prolonged confinement, in places where they would be deprived of drink, have healthy work, and be, of course, under medical supervision. He had shown the House that the present system of short sentences was absolutely useless. Would long sentences be of any more avail? The Departmental Committee thought they would not. Within 20 years the length of sentences had been halved, from 30½ to 15½ days. The opportunity for re-committals had increased, but the number of them had gone on steadily decreasing. In the vast majority of cases much less than the maximum sentences were inflicted, and where exceptional penalties had been sanctioned it was found that they were never inflicted. What was wanted was not longer sentences, but a different system of dealing with habitual offenders. Another question was, were these habitual offenders susceptible of reformation? He was happy to say that both Committees held that they were not incorrigible, and the English Committee was especially hopeful as to the possibility of reforming the more juvenile offenders, though it did not despair of the case of the older and more hardened. The Scotch Committee took much the same view. In Scotland by far the larger proportion of habitual offenders were women. They were 2½ times as numerous as the men, the explanation probably being that a single false step might land them in an unalterable career; but there existed among them a widespread and remarkable desire to reform. The Scotch Commission interviewed a large number of women in gaols and refuges, and reported that in many cases the stories were very sad. They went on to say:—

> "The sacrifices to which many of these women submit in their effort to escape from their wretched existence are convincing proof of their earnestness of purpose. In the Magdalene Asylums, in which so many of them find refuge, they voluntarily undergo close confinement for periods of 12 to 24 months, labouring hard at laundry or other work, and, in many cases, supporting by their toil the institutions in which they are immured, their monetary remuneration, postponed to the end of the term of voluntary confinement, amounting to £3 a year, including the value of their outfit. This they do in the hope of being restored to the paths of honest labour."

And they added:—

> "It does seem a pity that so many girls and women should in our gaols be submitted to a treatment which appears with each committal but to render them more reckless and abandoned."

The proposal of the Committee was that when a person was imprisoned three times within 12 months and was again charged, he should be remanded to the Sheriff, who should be authorised to inflict upon him imprisonment without the option of a fine and to decide whether he should be classed as an habitual offender. If he considered he should, he would order his name to be inscribed on a register, and inform him that, if he was charged so long as his name remained on the register, he would be again brought before the Sheriff, who would again punish him, and in addition order him to be sent to an adult reformatory for not less than 12 or more than 30 months. Referring to their proposal, the Committee said:—

> "The proposal which we submit aims not at increasing punishments but reducing them, and its object, based on many years' experience of a similar system in the treatment of youthful delinquents, is to safeguard society from the injury and annoyance which it at present suffers at the hands of habitual offenders, and with the minimum amount of compulsion and restraint by industrial training and discipline to restore as many as possible of them to the ranks of law-abiding citizens. With this object we have endeavoured to shape our proposal so as to avoid initial expense, and avail ourselves to the utmost of existing agencies, parochial and voluntary."

They proposed to utilise as homes for these persons poor-houses, many of which could be set free by judicious combination, and disused prisons. There were many prisons round which there was a certain amount of Government land available for being worked by the inmates. Many habitual offenders were physically unfit for labour, and gravitated between the prison and the poor-house, and gave rise to an immense amount of trouble and expense to the local authorities. The Committee were repeatedly implored to suggest powers to detain for a considerable period this class of persons. What they proposed in the case of the habitual offender who was physically unfit to be relegated to the labour settlement was that the sheriff should order his confinement in a poor-house, where he would be treated under rules sanctioned by the Secretary for Scotland. He thought that if a man had been sent to prison four times within a year, it showed that he was an habitual offender, and that some strong steps must be taken in respect of him. The Committee proposed that four committals within the year should stamp a person as an habitual offender, and if that figure were adopted it was estimated that 1,800 persons would be dealt with within the year, 500 males and 1,300 females. Some of those the sheriffs would acquit, in some cases sentences would be suspended, and the remainder would be declared habitual offenders. That declaration would suffice in itself to pull up a considerable number of them. In Glasgow in the olden days it was the custom to turn away a large number of persons arrested for drunkenness. In 1873 54,000 persons were arrested, and 30,000 were discharged without being brought before the magistrates. But the magistrates ordered a change; they ordered that no person should be dismissed without either leaving a pledge with the police or being brought before them, and after that system had been in vogue for two years the arrests for drunkenness fell from 54,000 to 36,000, a diminution of 37 per cent. The Committee felt justified in believing that the risk of a long confinement and enforced labour would have a very deterrent effect upon a considerable number of offenders; indeed, they calculated that not more than 900 would be sent to the labour settlement. They estimated that this operation would diminish the prison population of Scotland by 25 per cent., and that when it came into full effect there would be a saving to the State in the expenses of the prisons of something like £10,000 a year, and they proposed that with that sum the Treasury should endow the scheme. They believed that that, together with the labour of the person dealt with, would nearly suffice to make up the entire cost of the scheme, but any slight deficiency there might be they suggested should be made up by the class of offenders themselves. An enormous proportion of prisoners in Scotch prisons were committed there in default of the payment of fines. A man might be fined 40s., or in default of payment be committed to prison for four weeks. The man might have 35s. in his pocket, but he would be obliged to serve the whole of the four weeks unless he could raise the extra 5s. The Committee recommended a combination of fine and imprisonment. For instance, they recommended:—

> "That in all cases in which a prisoner is committed to prison in default of the payment of a fine, the prisoner should be released at any period of his detention, not solely on payment of the whole fine imposed as at present, but on the payment of such proportion of that fine as the number of days' imprisonment still to be undergone bears to the entire sentence of imprisonment in default of payment."

It was estimated that if this plan were adopted the fines paid in prisons would amount to between £7,000 and £8,000 a year. But there was another fund which the Committee thought might be treated as security in case of any deficit, and that was the £25,000 a year which local authorities received in the shape of fines from offenders. In the Committee's opinion the Government should find the money required for the initial expenses, which they estimated at £15,000 or £20,000, but that they suggested should be handed back by instalments. Considering, however, the large sums recently given to England without similar disbursements in Scotland, the Exchequer might be a little more generous and give a grant which would enable the scheme to be carried out without having recourse to any novel proposal. The estimates he had given were those of practical men. The scheme held out every prospect of success for the reformation of a large number of habitual criminals, while it would rid society of pests which were a source of demoralisation and danger. He would like to see the experiment tried all over the kingdom, but if financial or other considerations precluded the Government from entering upon an experiment on so large a scale, he urged upon them the desirability of at once trying it in Scotland, where there was a cut and dried scheme before them which could be tried with the most cordial co-operation on the part of the prison authorities and the local authorities.

***Dr. FARQUHARSON** (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he rose to second the Resolution his hon. Friend had moved. He and his hon. Friends had some slight hope that something would be done, because they knew the Home Secretary was sympathetic in this class of questions, and he had no doubt the Lord Advocate would prove himself no less so. The criminal classes were largely constructed by their surroundings; by the varied conditions which made it very difficult for them to get back to a good life once more. The result of inquiry and reflection convinced him that it was their duty to help these poor people, who of all classes were the most helpless and hopeless, and at the same time the most mischievous, not only destroying the reputation of the locality for sobriety and for absence of crime, but becoming active centres of demoralisation to the young, and, indeed, to the old. He thought the problem was not so difficult as it might appear at first sight. In every large town there was a small knot of what they might call the professional criminal class, who committed practically all the crimes. There were from 100 to 500 people who were oscillating perpetually between the poor house and the prison, going round and round like a stage army, centres of nuisance wherever they were, and giving a very false idea of the amount of crime in any particular locality. Many of these people committed their crimes under the influence of drink, and if they could get rid of them in a semi-permanent way they would clear the moral atmosphere, and make localities more peaceful and restore their credit for decency and orderly life. The present system had entirely broken down. Short sentences were useless, and long sentences were often worse by hardening and stereotyping the people subjected to them. It might be better if we could remove these unfortunate people to some lethal chamber, for many of them would be a great deal happier dead than alive. But that being impossible, we must consider some method of getting them out of the way, and he thought his hon. Friend's proposal, by removing them from their bad life and their wretched associations and surroundings for a reasonable time, and by shutting them up and employing them in good useful remunerative work, was the best and the only chance they could give them.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present—

The House was Adjourned at Ten Minutes before Five of the Clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 5th May 1897.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

MR. WILLIAM ALLEN (Newcastle-under-Lyme), moved "That this Bill be now Read a Second time." He said that the Measure was very short, and the second clause, which was the effective one, proposed to limit the hours of labour in mines to eight hours from bank to bank. He desired to say at the outset that no modification or amendment of this proposal, in the direction of local option for Durham and Northumberland or South Wales, would be accepted by the promoters of the Measure. There had been a very considerable growth of opinion in that House in favour of the principle of the Measure during recent years. Thus, whereas in 1892 there voted 160 in favour of that principle and 272 against it, and in 1893 there voted 279 in favour of it and 201 against it; in 1894 there voted 281 in favour of it and only 194 against it. It could not be said that these figures were the result of the change of Ministry that took place during those years, because the majority in favour of the principle of the Measure on the last occasion was more than twice the normal majority of the Government of the day. Therefore it was evident that the principle of the Bill was supported almost as strongly by hon. Members sitting opposite as it was by those sitting on the Opposition side of the House. The Bill would affect about 584,000 persons who were employed in the mining industry of the country, about 45,000 or 50,000 of whom were under 15 years of age. The first consideration for the House would be what was the opinion of those who were engaged in the coal mining industry, and whether the great majority of them were in favour of this proposed legislation or not? He believed that he was in a position to show the House that at the present time an overwhelming majority of the men in the federated districts were in favour of the Bill. The principal opposition to the Measure came from Durham, Northumberland, and South Wales. In the latter case, however, the opposition was of an unimportant character, being confined to the men in one valley only, and even there the opposition was not at all of a strong character. In other parts of the Principality, however, the men were strongly in favour of the Bill. The main opposition to the proposed legislation, therefore, came from Durham and Northumberland, and even there a considerable change of feeling on the subject had taken place quite recently. At a ballot which was taken, he believed, by the authority of the leaders of the Durham Federation, on the question whether that Federation should join the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, which was unanimously in favour of an eight hours' limitation of labour, 29,000 voted for joining, and only between 13,000 and 14,000 against it, a large number of the men not taking the trouble to vote on the question. Thus, even in Durham, a majority of nearly two to one were in favour of the principle of the Measure. [*Cries of* "No!"] What were the reasons that the miners urged upon the House for giving them special treatment with regard to their hours of labour? In the first place, their work was exceedingly unpleasant, and in view of the conditions under which their labour was performed no one would contend that eight hours down a mine was not a sufficiently long period for the men to work. The men worked in gloom, and in what was practically a living tomb, while they were exposed to the greatest dangers to life and limb. When a man descended into a mine he took his life in his hands, and was liable to being crushed to death by falls from the roof, to being drowned by the flooding of the mine, and to being blown to pieces by explosions. He also ran the risk of meeting one of the most lingering and horrible deaths in utter darkness when, through an accident, he was cut off from all hope of escape. In 1895 there were 852 accidents in mines, which resulted in 1,173 deaths, besides numerous injuries by which men were maimed for life. In these circumstances the House was bound to grant the miners the Bill which they desired, unless some overwhelming reason could be shown for withholding it from them. The main reason which had been

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

urged against this legislation was that it would restrict the output of coal. He did not believe that the output would be decreased. There was a great deal of evidence available on the question as to whether shorter hours really did restrict output; but there was a maximum beyond which a man could not work with any effect. A great many experiments in the shortening of hours of labour had been made. There were the experiments at docks and Government factories, and the opinion of the authorities was that the work had not been diminished by the shortening of the hours. When the Ten Hours' Bill was introduced in 1847 in the textile factories, the inspectors were practically unanimous that there would be a reduction in the output by the operation of the Bill. For the first year there was a reduction; but after that the factory inspectors, who had opposed the Measure, were able to say that the people had fallen in with the new arrangement, and that the output was actually larger in the shorter hours, while the wages earned were greater than in the longer hours. In 1892 the Colonial Secretary, speaking of the men who had to feed self-acting machines, proved by the figures which he then quoted that the shortening of hours was followed by scarcely any diminution in the output or in the total amount of work done. A good deal of evidence was taken before the Labour Commission, especially in relation to mines, and there it was shown that shorter hours were not followed by a decrease in the output. Probably the strongest case was that of the Fife and Kinross mines. In 1871 the hours were considerably reduced. The masters endeavoured to force the men to work the old hours without success, and the output pèr man had continued to be as great as it was before the shortening of the hours. The output in those counties was now as great as the output in Lanarkshire, where the men were working longer hours. It was also contended by opponents of the Measure that it interfered with the hours of adult male labour, and that the Legislature had no right to do this. But the hours of adult male labour had again and again been interfered with by Parliament. There were, for example, the Sunday laws, the Bank Holiday laws, and the Factory Acts, by the provisions of which women and children were prevented from working more than a certain time, and thereby indirectly affecting the hours of the men. In the case of the Truck Acts also contracts made by adult males were interfered with. There was a difference of opinion as to whether the hours should be shortened by voluntary effort or by legal enactment. If they were shortened by voluntary effort there would be no finality, but constant strife and bitterness between employer and employed. If, on the other hand, they were shortened by legal enactment, the question was settled once for all, and strife was obviated. If the hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham (Sir J. Pease) had been in his place he would have been disposed to claim his support for the Bill. At the recent Cleveland election the hon. Baronet pledged the hon. Member for Cleveland (Mr. A. E. Pease) to support the Bill; he, indeed, went so far as to say that if the hon. Member for Cleveland was not in the House when the division was taken, he would himself vote for it. In these circumstances he thought that it must be through some inadvertence that the hon. Baronet's name was attached to the Whip opposing the Bill. He trusted that the House would read the Bill a Second time, and so accord to the miners the Measure which they so urgently desired. [" Hear, hear! "]

*Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said he had always taken an interest in the progress of this Bill, because his constituency contained a large number of men engaged in the mining industry. When the House found that a demand was being persistently made by the vast majority of an industrial class, calling on the Legislature to shorten their hours of labour, he thought there was at all events a *primâ facie* case made out for granting the demand. The principle of this Bill had been affirmed in the House of Commons on more than one occasion, and it had received support from both Front Benches. Nobody thought that a period of eight hours was too short a time to spend in a gloomy coalpit. No occupation was carried on under more depressing conditions. In the Altham Collieries in Lancashire the eight hours system had been introduced successfully, and the wages paid to the men were as good as they were in any part of the county. In these collieries the output of coal had not been reduced.

That showed that the system need not prevent successful colliery enterprise. In the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham there were collieries employing some 1,200 or 1,300 men, in which the system of an eight hours' day had worked satisfactorily, and the men in neighbouring districts were anxious to work under the same conditions, but as yet had not been able to obtain a general and universal acceptance of the system. The experience of other industries was that the shortening of the hours of labour did not result in a diminished output, or in lessened efficiency. The demand made by the supporters of this Bill was reasonable from the humane point of view, and was in accordance with the tendency of the times to shorten hours of labour in arduous and dangerous occupations. When the late Government were in power one of the most satisfactory things done was the shortening of hours of labour. In 1893 the hours of labour of 33,000 men were shortened, while only 1,530 people had longer hours forced upon them. In 1894 77,000 persons had their hours of labour shortened. In January this year 1,350 people had their hours shortened, while only 333 had their hours increased, and in February no one was reported to have had his hours increased, while the hours of 3,500 people were shortened. So the tendency to shorten the hours of labour which was a marked characteristic of 1893 and 1894, was still going on, and it was high time it reached the coal mining industry. Physiological students of eminence have held that it was a law of nature that the maximum efficiency of labour was secured in an eight hours' day, and if that was true of occupations carried on in the invigorating light of day, still more must it be true of an occupation carried on underground without the stimulating effect of light and fresh air. This calling was an exceptional one, demanding exceptional treatment, for it was carried on under conditions which were disagreeable, depressing, difficult, and dangerous. Vitality and vigour were kept up by exposure to sunlight. That was true of the vegetable world and the animal world alike. The nervous system of men who worked underground suffered inevitably, for they worked by a dim and uncertain artificial light. Then, however thorough the ventilation of a mine might be, the air which the men breathed was comparatively bad. The strain on their muscular and nervous systems was exceptionally great, and a friend of his who had examined some thousand miners found the eyesight of no fewer than one-third of them affected in consequence of the nature of their employment. Moreover, this was one of the most dangerous of all callings. The country lost about 1,000 miners by death every year out of some 500,000 men engaged underground. That was a greater mortality than that of railway servants, whose hours of labour were interfered with, or could be interfered with, under the law. The injuries that these men suffered were also excessively frequent. 14·3 per cent. of the men were injured every year to such an extent that they had to remain away from work for a week, and he believed that nearly half the men were hurt in the course of the year. He knew that figures had been obtained from the Registrar General's Department which rather pointed to the fact that the miner's calling was not unhealthy. But a fallacy underlay those statistics. In the first place, the average miner was an exceptionally strong and healthy man before he undertook this work. He came, as a rule, from the healthiest class of the community—the labouring class in agricultural districts. He contended that the miners, being a specially fine body of men, physically, they ought to be compared in the matter of mortality, not with the general population, but with a physically fine class of men like the agricultural labourers; and if that were done it would be found that the mortality amongst them was the greater. To compare them with the general population was to proceed on a false basis of comparison. He believed he was perfectly justified in saying that the mortality among miners was greater than that among other healthy and picked classes in the country, and that the occupation was not healthy and did impair the health of the workers. He thought, therefore, on these grounds they were all justified in calling the miners' an exceptional calling, and as an exceptional calling he thought they were justified in demanding for it exceptional legislation. He knew that the answer would be that the remedy ought to be brought about by combination and not by legislation. If it could be got by combination he would be pleased, but if it was not to be got without serious results which combination sometimes produced he should object to combination. He did not like strikes, and he could not conceive anyone who had had experience of strikes being anxious that this question should be decided by strikes. He did not want to see an industrial war to settle this question such as that which occurred in 1893. The better, the wiser and the more humane way was that this question should be settled by legislation. ["Hear, hear!"] Even in Durham the men engaged in connection with the engines and the winding of collieries were anxious to have a limit put to their hours of work.

*Mr. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): The winding men in Durham have eight hours now.

*Sir WALTER FOSTER: I have here a paper headed the "National Federation of Enginemen's Protective Associations of Great Britain," which says:—

> "The Durham Mining Conciliation Board made a claim for shorter hours for 684 men working 12 hours per day, but absolutely failed."

*Mr. J. WILSON (Durham): They were not enginemen at all.

*Sir WALTER FOSTER: They were underground men of some kind, who have a combination of their own.

*Mr. WILSON: The case which the hon. Member states is not correct in that particular. I happen to be the Secretary of the Conciliation Board, and the Conciliation Board never made a claim for these men at all.

*Sir WALTER FOSTER said that so far as he was informed there were a number of underground men who wanted eight hours a day and had tried unsuccessfully to get it by combination. He did not think that his Friends who opposed the Bill would deny that the ideal condition would be that the younger workers should have the eight hours a day as well as the men who had the shorter hours of work at the face. ["Hear, hear!"] He could not think for a moment that they were so little open to argument and so litle inspired by the dictates of humanity that they would not try to reduce the hours of the young people underground. He believed that the future population of Durham and Northumberland would be the better, morally and physically, if the younger workers had shortened hours underground. There was yet another point. In all cases the effect of shorter hours of labour was beneficial to the general tone, physically and intellectually, of the persons employed, and apart from the considerations of trade, looking at it from the higher and better platform of the national advantage, he believed it would be a benefit if the whole mining population of this country had shorter hours of labour underground. Individually the men would have more leisure for their improvement. Some people might say that they would have more leisure for amusements that were not always of a highly intellectual or desirable kind. He did not believe that for a moment. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that wherever shorter hours had been given there had always been an improvement of the moral as well as the intellectual tone of the population. ["Hear, hear!"] In no part of the country had the University extension system produced more good than it had in the counties of Durham and Northumberland amongst the miners, who had taken advantage of these opportunities of improving their mental condition. They had only to look at the representatives of those districts to see that they were an exceptional race of men—["hear, hear!"]—and he wanted an exceptional race of men to come from other parts of the country. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] He believed that if this Bill were adopted, any difficulty or danger in the way of diminution of output would be met at once by the greater regularity with which miners would discharge their work. At all events, he would ask his hon. Friends who were connected with the northern counties to pause before they used their voices and votes in opposition to this Measure. He believed that if they supported the Bill they would do much to advance the general condition of the mining population, not only materially, but morally and intellectually. In his opinion, the Bill was based on principles of justice and fairness, and he maintained and believed that it could be passed not only without danger to the great industry it affected, but even for the general welfare and intellectual and moral improvement of the men engaged in it. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Sir ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead) said that as an Amendment stood on the Paper in his name to the effect that, unless the public safety be involved, the House declined to interfere with the freedom of grown-up men in regard to the disposal of their labour, the House would understand that he was one of those very old-fashioned people who disputed the right of Parliament to interfere with grown-up men in the disposal of their labour. As to the case of Sunday labour, everyone knew that their Sunday laws dated many years back, and were based upon religious grounds. The hon. Member quoted the Truck Act, but there they did not interfere with a man's right to sell his labour as he pleased. All they did was to interfere with the currency paid for his labour. Reference was also made to the Act recently passed as to the control of railway workers, but that Act was passed on the excuse that the safety of the public was involved. He knew from personal experience that many railway servants very bitterly resented the interference with their right to dispose of their labour as they pleased and to work a few minutes longer. As to the statement that a majority of the miners were in favour of this special legislation, he begged to point out that what they had to consider was not the view of a particular class with regard to a particular measure, but the good of the country at large. When the Mover and Seconder of the Bill maintained that miners were in an exceptional position owing to the danger of their calling, he wished it borne in mind that this argument cut both ways. In order to maintain that argument the supporters of the Bill ought to be able to show that the danger was caused by excessive length of hours. It was quite true that the work of miners was difficult, disagreeable and dangerous, but not a hint had been given that the danger arose from the time that miners worked. They all, he supposed, recognised the advantages to be gained from shortening the hours of labour; but he and those who thought with him said that should be brought about by voluntary arrangement and not by vote of that House. ["Hear, hear!"] Until these great trade organisations failed there could be no possible excuse for State interference. The miners had the strongest organisation of any trade in the country. That had been shown many times over when they had dictated to their employers. Besides, the miners had this great advantage—that they dominated all other trades. Not only the comforts of modern life, but the conduct of almost every other trade, depended upon an adequate supply of coal. This was a leverage which was not possessed by any other trade. ["Hear, hear!"] The miners also possessed another lever in that they were practically a close corporation. They reaped the economic advantages of the difficulty and danger of their calling. If a strike took place there was no danger of outside interference; they could not turn an agricultural labourer or an artisan into a miner when the coal miner was on strike. As to another argument, he asked whether, if Parliament interfered with the means of earning a living, it would not be equally justified in interfering with and limiting the earnings of the individual. They interfered, in that Bill, with the miners' earning power. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] That must be admitted if they interfered with his hours of labour. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] If this was done they might be returning to the bad old system of State interference with the limitation of wages, since if the public welfare justified State interference with hours to avoid the inconvenience of a strike, it would also justify on the same grounds interference with wages in case of any exorbitant demands of the miners raising the price of coal. Another objection to this interference by the State was that once they passed an Act it would be very difficult to change it. If they brought the change about by combination they could alter it at a moment's notice. There might be circumstances—great distress, or scarcity, or a national calamity—when the miners might desire, but Parliament would have no time or desire, to make a change; but with combination the change could be made without Parliamentary interference. About 100 years ago labour escaped from the trammels of State interference in which it was formerly cooped up. In the course of the century it had become a mighty power, controlling policy, upsetting Cabinets, and swaying the whole management of affairs. He would strongly urge the House of Commons not to put back the Parliamentary clock of progress by 100 years, and not to enter upon a course of State interference with the individual, which he believed would be disastrous to English liberties and freedom.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.) thought the Bill was singularly inopportune, for we were now having sent into England very large quantities of iron and steel from America. In Wolverhampton it was being delivered by thousands of tons, although it had to incur cost of carriage equal to 35 per cent. of the selling price. After deducting the cost of carriage, the selling price would leave to the maker at Pittsburg 15s. per ton less than steel could be made for in this country. He admitted that the quality of the steel was very inferior, and that it was suitable only for a limited number of purposes, but none the less, it was by thousands of tons displacing English manufacture and English labour. The chief reason that the Americans were able to send their steel into this country was the low cost of coal which obtained there, the selling price of which was about 2s. or 2s. 6d. a ton, whereas the cost of producing in this country, besides royalties and all that kind of thing, was at least double that amount. The explanation of the low price of coal in America was furnished to him by the Member for Walthamstow, who had lately paid a visit to America, and when he came back and was interviewed by the inevitable interviewer, he said that the miners were working in the United States for wages of not more than 3s. or 4s. a day of 10 or 11 hours. Here our miners earned from 5s. 6d. to 6s. a day for an average of seven hours' work, and in some cases even less, so that per hour the wages in the United States were considerably less than half that which obtained in this country. If that were true, was this a time at which to add at least 20 per cent. to the cost of producing coal? It was not the iron and steel industry alone that was affected, for coal was the motive power of every manufacture, and was its very life blood, and not only that, but it was an absolute necessary of life to every working man, for it was as necessary that he should be kept warm as that he should be supplied with food. Were the miners, he asked, so oppressed and so suffering as to justify such legislation for their benefit. They were at this moment obtaining higher wages for their work than almost any of the artisans in the country. Was their case so bad that the community should suffer the enormous burden of an addition of 1s. 6d. a ton to the price of coal, which would come to £7,000,000 per annum? The Member for the Ilkeston Division (Sir Walter Foster) spoke of their labouring for eight hours, but no miner worked now for eight hours. If the proposal were that the miners' labour should be restricted to seven hours, he should not oppose it, for he thought that was quite long enough for a collier to work; but the proposal was that he should not be in the pit more than eight hours. Perfect confusion would prevail in the working of the different collieries if the proposal were adopted, for some collieries have to send down 400 or 500 men, while others only send down 30, which made a great difference in the time required for getting the men into the pit, and the inequality would be still greater on account of the distance of the workings from the shaft, which in some cases was a mile, and in others 100 yards; so that it would be impossible to regulate the men's pay in proportion to the amount of their work. On the question of health, he urged that the conditions of the employment were not unhealthy, having regard to the various Acts for providing efficient ventilation, and undoubtedly a coal pit was a much better ventilated place than nine-tenths of the manufactories of this country. The Member for Ilkeston admitted that the death rate of miners was very low, but said it was owing to their being the sons of agricultural labourers. In fact, miners were the sons of miners—the healthy sons of healthy sires. The Miners' Federation, which were proposing this legislation, prevailed chiefly in the Midlands, and by the excellence of their organisation they had contrived to keep up wages 30 per cent. above what was called the standard rate which prevailed in 1887 and 1888, while in Scotland and

South Wales wages had been reduced so that in Scotland they were only 6¾ per cent., and in South Wales 2¾ per cent. above the standard rate. From 1890 to 1895 the production of coal in South Wales and Scotland had increased 15 million tons, but where the wages had been kept up the production of coal had been reduced. The Mover of the Bill had repudiated any suggestion of applying the principle of local option to the question, because he knew that if it were in operation in one district and not in another, in the district where it prevailed the pits would be absolutely closed and shut up. The first effect of the proposal, by restricting the output 15 to 20 per cent., would be to bring about a coal famine and famine prices, which would be disastrous first to the manufacturers, secondly to the coalowners, and finally and most of all to the miners themselves. He hoped the House would reject the Bill by a large majority.

Mr. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) congratulated the Mover and Seconder of the Bill on the tone and temper with which they had approached the subject, and said the Mover had made the very best of a bad case. He admired the courage of the hon. Member who moved the Bill, having regard to the fate of his predecessors who undertook the same task. This Bill had been moved three times, in 1892, 1893, and 1894, and of the three Members who moved the Bill on each of those occasions, not one had a seat at the present time for the division which he then represented.

Mr. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow) said he wished to make it distinctly clear that the eight hours' question had nothing to do either with his defeat in Ince or his return for Walthamstow.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): As the opponent of the hon. Member in Ince, I beg to say that I raised the question in my election address.

Mr. DAVID THOMAS thanked the hon. Member for Walthamstow for his admission, because one of his points was that the Lancashire miners did not take that deep interest in the question which it was claimed they did. If they did they had a curious way of showing their appreciation of those hon. Members who had gone out of their way to promote this movement in the House of Commons. He denied that a large majority of the miners of the United Kingdom were in favour of the Bill. Even a majority of what were known as the direct Labour representatives who represented mining constituencies were opposed to the Bill. There were three against and two in favour. The promoters of the Miners' Federation required the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, and it was owing to the obstinacy of the hon. Member for Normanton (Mr. Pickard) and those who were immediately supporting him, that the Eight Hours (Mines) Bill had not become law three years ago. He claimed that he represented the majority of the workmen in South Wales and Monmouth upon this matter. [*Cries of* "No!"] If not, why would not the hon. Member accept the challenge he had made over and over again and put the question to the arbitrament of a test ballot? His right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean claimed to know more about the opinions of South Wales colliers than he did himself. He claimed a greater degree of knowledge, because for every meeting his right hon. Friend had addressed, he had addressed scores. If his right hon. Friend was so satisfied that the opinions of South Wales miners were with him then he could not object to the principle of local option. ["Hear, hear!"] His right hon. Friend, however, had said he would rather not have the votes of those who were in favour of local option, and that being so, he hoped those weak-kneed Members would act accordingly and not seek to salve their consciences by voting for the Second Reading, thinking they could introduce the principle of local option in Committee. Again, one hon. Member supported the Bill because of the effect it would have on output, while another hon. Member supported it on the ground that it would have no effect on output. There was another circumstance which spoke very well for the unselfishness of the Miners' Federation. In most districts of the Federation—in South Yorkshire, for instance—the men practically had already an eight hours' day. Yet they were the chief promoters of the Bill, which did not assist them, but thrust upon an unwilling section of their fellow-miners an eight hours' day. [*Laughter.*]

MR. BENJAMIN PICKARD (York, W.R., Normanton): The miners of Yorkshire are not the principal promoters of the Measure, but the miners of Lancashire.

MR. DAVID THOMAS said that the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill spoke strongly against it at the last election, but he was "converted" by the miners of Lancashire. [*Laughter.*] It had been urged in favour of the Bill that it was unfair that the boys in Northumberland and Durham should be working long hours while the men were working short hours. It was an insult to the intelligence of the House that such an argument should be used by anyone who understood mining matters. Surely it would be an easy thing to amend the Mines Regulation Act so as to raise the age in the definition of a boy from 16 to 21, and diminish the maximum number of hours per day to eight. [*Cheers.*] Yet the House was asked to believe that this Bill, which would revolutionise the working of many mines, and affect three-quarters of a million of miners, was necessary to shorten the hours of the boys employed in the Northumberland and Durham collieries. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said that under voluntary arrangements there had been no restriction of output; but it was a fallacy to suppose that that was a test of what would happen under legal enactment. There must be some point beyond which the hours of labour could not be diminished without restricting the output, and that point had been very nearly reached in South Wales. He knew this from practical experience. When eight hours a day were worked on Saturdays, as against 10½ hours on other week days, the diminution in output on the Saturday was almost exactly proportionate to the diminution in the hours. He had wished to be a pioneer in this movement for shorter hours, and in the collieries with which he was connected he had at one time put into operation an eight hours' day. The figures showed that the reduction of output per man was almost exactly proportionate to the reduction of hours; and, after 13 months, the system was abandoned at the insistence of the men. The supporters of the Bill had not attempted to deal with the specific objections to the Bill, or with the geological difficulty. At the present time the efficiency of labour in the Nottinghamshire collieries was 30 per cent. higher than in the Welsh collieries. Dare the hon. Member for Normanton suggest to the Welsh miners that it was because they were inferior as workmen? ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The fact was due entirely to differences of strata. In South Wales three or four times as much timber had to be used. If the supporters of the Bill would introduce a provision to alter the laws of nature, and provide that the geological strata in Wales should be made the same as in Nottinghamshire, and would give a guarantee that the provision should be carried into effect, then he would become one of the most ardent supporters of the Bill. In the meantime he begged to move to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." [*Cheers.*]

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) thought no one could find fault with the tone in which the Motion had been made. Whether they were supporters or opponents of this Bill, they all had a great desire to see the hours of labour shortened as much as possible, provided that it did not inflict any serious loss upon the general community. During the last 20 or 30 years they had seen very great changes take place in this respect, and he thought the only safe and judicious way to proceed with the shortening of hours of labour was by mutual arrangement. He had expected when hon. Members brought forward an important Bill to restrict the right of individuals to work as they thought best in their own interests, that they would have produced a very strong case in favour of such action, but he failed to see that any case had been made out with regard to miners, or to the general industries of the country. From what had been said it appeared that there was no chance whatever of any Amendment being accepted in the direction of local option, so as to give localities the power to arrange their hours by mutual agreement or otherwise. He was one of those who were rather against the general principle of this question. He thought that every man had the right to work when he liked, where he liked, and for what he liked without the interference of Parliament. That profession of belief was a very broad one, but he believed it was in the interests of the general community, and he would like to see such a line adopted with regard to their legislation. He knew that there were cases where an exception might be claimed, and claimed with justice—where it was undoubtedly for the safety of the community, or where it was necessary to make certain regulations for the benefit of an industry or those who were engaged in it. He had spoken on several occasions on this question, and he was afraid he must on this occasion, from necessity somewhat, travel over old ground. But what he would ask was that, if they were to have legislation of this kind, they must first make out a case that there ought to be legislation for the general trade of the country. If there was a case, then he said they had no right to pick out any special industry to be dealt with by legislation. He failed, however, to see that there could be such a case for the general industries of the country, and he thought there was a much weaker case for legislation in regard to miners than there was for the general trades of the country. Was there a trade which was better controlled and regulated by means of trades unions than the mining industry? He questioned whether there was one. If there was one trade in the country which was more able than another to enforce reasonable conditions of labour upon employers, he thought it was the mining industry, and it was absurd to tell him that owing to the weakness of the trades unions, and in order to avoid strikes, they should interfere with the hours of labour by legislation. In his judgment such a proceeding would not avoid strikes, and he was as averse to strikes as anyone. In the county of Durham they had a very admirable system of working by means of committees of workmen and owners, and they found that they had got very satisfactory conditions for all those employed in the mining industry. In that locality they had better conditions, in his judgment, than existed in any other part of the country. He thought Parliament should only interfere in cases where the hours were exceptionally long, and where the occupation was very unhealthy or specially dangerous. Could they claim that there was on these grounds a case for this particular Bill? In the first place, was there any case made out that this industry was especially unhealthy? He was not surprised that the Seconder of the Motion took a very strong line in regard to this point, because the statistics produced in Dr. Ogle were so strong that they must of necessity carry great weight in this matter; but the Registrar General of births, deaths, and marriages stated in his Report in 1885—and since then great improvements had been made in the way of ventilation, draining, and in other respects in our mines—that in spite of their terrible liability to accident and their constant exposure to an atmosphere vitiated by coal dust, by foul air, and by an excessively high temperature, the comparative mortality figure of these labourers is considerably below that of all males. Nor is this only true for coal miners in the aggregate, but it is true, with one single exception, for the miners in each great coal area taken separately. It holds good for Durham, with Northumberland, for Lancashire, for Derbyshire, with Nottinghamshire, for the West Riding, and for Staffordshire. In each of these areas the comparative mortality figure of all males within the area is higher than that of miners.

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): Does that include boys?

Sir JAMES JOICEY said he understood it included the whole mining industry. Then, if in each case we exclude accidents, it will be found that the mortality of the coal miners only slightly exceed that of the most healthy class of men—namely, the farmers, the agricultural labourers, and the gardeners. Dr. Ogle, in 1891, read a Paper, in which he gave a comparison of the rates of mortality in different occupations. The clergymen stood at the top of the list as being the healthiest men in the community. He observed that there were a large number of industries which were much more unhealthy than the mining industry. Hotel servants represented a rate of mortality of 397; street hawkers, 338; earthenware makers, 313; file makers, 300; whereas, coal miners represented only 160, and that figure included the accidents which they were subject to in their work. Therefore, seeing that mining was one of the most healthy occupations in the country, he thought that no case on that ground could be made out for any interference by Parliament in this question. The Seconder of the Motion said that was accounted for by the fact that agricultural labourers were imported into the mines. He (Sir James) could speak with some certainty as to Durham and Northumberland, and there they had men who represented generations of miners, and his own family had been represented for 300 years in that industry; therefore, in the counties he had named there must be a very small percentage indeed of men employed in the mines who had not been born and bred in connection with that industry. The next case put forward was that it was a much more dangerous occupation than any other. He admitted that mining was certainly very dangerous, but what he wanted to know was how this Bill was going to make it more safe. ["Hear, hear!"] He challenged any hon. Member to show him how this Bill was to make the occupation of a miner more safe than it was. As a matter of fact it had been shown that by far the greater majority of accidents occurred in the first four hours after the men went down into the pit; therefore, it looked as if there would be little benefit got from decreasing the hours to eight. He maintained that instead of giving increased safety this Bill would give increased danger—["hear, hear"]—because shortened hours would tend to greater hurry and greater haste than now. Had there been any case made out with regard to the question of danger? He did not think there had been if they compared the danger of this occupation with that of some others. If they took the railway interest they would find that accidents took place very often on the surface, and with regard to sailors, he would think that there were three times as many sailors lost in a year as there were miners, and when they considered that there were something like 200,000 or 300,000 more miners than sailors in the country, they might conclude that the sailor's life was a more hazardous one than the miner's. Then with regard to the hours worked, he maintained that they were not longer in the mining industry than in any other. If they took the whole of the country and considered the hours worked by the miners they would find that they compared favourably with those of almost any other industry. They ought also to take into consideration what was not taken into consideration by many Gentlemen, namely, that in the engineering system, eight hours meant actually eight hours work, exclusive of meal time. But in the mines, it was not a case of eight hours' work. ["Hear, hear!"] Everybody who knew anything of mines knew that there was a considerable time occupied in a miner going down from the surface to the working place. He had no doubt it averaged three-quarters of an hour each way. The hours per week under ground in certain mining districts were 35 hours, 21 minutes, but the actual time at work was 27 hours, 46 minutes for five days a week. He challenged any hon. Member who was anxious to make an exception in favour of miners to bring forward hours in any industry in the country which were better than these. The Seconder of the Motion supported this Bill because it was an unpleasant thing to work in the dark. There might be more pleasant positions than being down a mine, but he could assure his hon. Friend that men who were accustomed to it were not so easily alarmed as he seemed to think. It reminded him of an incident that happened in connection with his own business. A foreign Gentleman who never saw a mine, but who was a large consumer of coal, thought he would like to go down a mine and see the coal produced. He was dressed in miner's clothes, put on his rough flannel and was very proud of himself. But when he looked down the shaft his courage left him, and he said, "What! go down there? I would very much rather go to the bottomless pit." He turned back and did not go down. That was the feeling of some people in regard to the life of a miner, but so far as he was concerned, if he had to earn his living by working with his hands, there was no occupation he would choose sooner than that of a miner. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] Out of a hundred occupations, Dr. Ogle said that there were 70 which were more unhealthy than that of the miner, and in face of such facts as these he failed to see how they were to make out a case for special legislation so far as the miners were concerned. In Durham there might be a strong case with regard to their boys. ["Hear, hear!"] He was not prepared to say that their boys were in the position that they would like to see them in. ["Hear, hear!"] Nor did he think that they had yet reached the lowest level of hours that they would be able to allow their boys to work. He observed that the Durham Mine Owners' Association said that, assuming that the boys worked 11 days out of a fortnight, which was not the average, because the average was only 10, boys under 16 would work 50 hours for the first week, and 54 hours for the second, and boys over 16 would work 50 hours for the first week and 59 hours for the second week. But their actual work, taking away the time of going to work, was for boys under 16 40 hours, and over that age the same for the first week, and, for the second week, for boys under 16, 42 hours, and over 16, 47 hours. The average was 41 for boys under 16 and 43½ for boys over 16.

MR. PICKARD: Will the hon. Member state the actual hours worked per day?

SIR JAMES JOICEY: The actual hours worked per day were 10, except on Saturday. They were underground 10 hours. In Durham and Northumberland, where they had the oldest coal mine interests in the country, they had a system of working which was very advantageous so far as the miners were concerned. They had a system of double shifts, and he was prepared to state that the time that the miners worked was not more than 5½ to 6 hours. Therefore, if they compared the conditions of work in Durham and Northumberland with those of any other part of the country, they would find that these counties stood in the most favourable condition. He could bring someone to bear that out who was not generally in favour of the action they were taking. Mr. Keir Hardie, speaking in his (Sir James's) constituency, and alluding to the miners of Northumberland and Durham, said:—

> "They had done a great deal in the past towards setting an example to their fellow-miners throughout the country. He did not know any other place where the hours of labour were so short as they were in these two counties, and he did not know any organisations so strong as theirs. Whilst he had serious differences with the leaders of these men, he paid them, as they knew, every credit for what they had done in the splendid work of building up such organisations."

That was a very fair and unbiassed statement of the conditions of labour so far as the miners were concerned in Northumberland and Durham, and they had been brought about by the double-shift system. Measures were being taken to introduce machinery to draw coals instead of them being drawn by the boys. Many of the mines in the county of Durham were laid out on the old system, and if they attempted by Act of Parliament to make a hard-and-fast change like this they would do mischief and injury, not only to the mine owners, but to all those interested in the work. As to the boys, they were paid what they earned, and they earned from 15s. to 20s. per week, and they were very strong and healthy. They would find, whether they looked at the wages, the hours or conditions of labour, that the boys employed in the mines were not worse, but better off in many cases than were the boys engaged in many other industries. He saw great difficulty in applying a Measure of this kind to mines. If they took the ordinary engineering works or manufactory, the conditions were pretty much the same among them all. But who ever saw two mines exactly alike? ["Hear, hear!"] They found the most extraordinary differences existing in mines, and the mining industry was the last industry which should have a hard and fast line, such as that proposed by the Bill, applied to it. He had listened to the whole of the Debates which had taken place in that House on this subject, and he was bound to say no solid or sound argument had been adduced which ought, in his judgment, to induce the House to take action of the kind suggested in the Bill. If they wanted to apply legislation of this kind, they should apply it to industries where it would do the least harm.

*SIR C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said the hon. Baronet who had just sat down was not in quite the same position as the hon. Member for Merthyr. The hon. Member for Merthyr, although he moved the rejection of the Bill, was really among their friends, because he was in favour of the limitation of the hours of grown-up men. But the hon. Baronet was in a wholly different position, because although he put it rather mildly to-day, still he did put it that he was one of those who were opposed to a legislative restriction upon the hours of grown-up men. The hon. Baronet had suggested that the proposal embodied in this Bill might have been more fittingly applied to other trades than the mining industry. The reason for picking out this trade for this legislation was that, at the present moment, there was a much more general concurrence among the miners with regard to an eight hours' day, whether obtained by law or by agreement, than there was in any other trade. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!" *and* "No!"] At all events, the overwhelming majority of the miners were in favour of this Bill. Merthyr and Aberdare, and Northumberland and part of Durham objected to the Bill. The men in the north had obtained shorter hours by trade union effort, and, therefore, they might be counted on the side of those who were for shorter hours in the mining industry. They had this fact, that while an eight hours' system for all the trades of the country, or for the great majority, was asked for by a large number of gentlemen in this country, and was supported sometimes by a majority, and sometimes by a large minority at the Trades Union Congress, there was almost absolute unanimity at those congresses in regard to this particular industry. The workmen of this country had themselves selected this industry as the one in which there was that general concurrence which enabled them to ask, with overwhelming power, that it should be treated with consideration on this question. Another argument which had been advanced was as to the character of the mining industry. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton said that mining was not unhealthy, and the hon. Member for Chester-le-Street distinctly described it as a healthy occupation. There was one thing to be said, whatever view they might take with regard to the healthiness or unhealthiness of mining—and he had never been disposed to exaggerate its unhealthiness—in considering the statistics on the point, and that was that men did not die, as a rule, as coal miners. It was an occupation of healthy men, and it was an occupation out of which the men, when they became weak and old, were driven. There were more driven out of it in some parts of the country than in others. Therefore, when they came to die, they did not always die as coal miners, but as something else. Then, in some parts of the country, Friendly Societies had found themselves forced to raise the contributions as against miners, and that went to show what they thought either of the unhealthiness or the risks of the occupation. But the House would remember that his hon. Friend who moved the Bill read the speeches of the Home Secretary and of the Colonial Secretary on this point the other day, when both went out of their way to describe coal-mining as the most dangerous occupation in this country. The hon. Baronet had said that the Return showing that the largest number of accidents occurred during the first four hours of the day had come upon him as a surprise. Surely, to one so experienced in coal mining as the hon. Baronet who had just sat down, it must be known that the risks on first going to work were greater then than at a later period, and he could not imagine that this had any bearing on the question. The hon. Member for Merthyr tried to show once again that there was either a preponderance of feeling on the part of miners against this Bill or a very large minority against it. Whether they looked at the number of delegates sent to the Trade Union Congress, or the representatives sent to that House, the overwhelming majority of the miners of South Wales were in favour of the Bill. On all the facts which had been presented to the House, he contended that they were justified in saying, therefore, that the great majority of the men employed in mines in South Wales were in favour of the Bill, and that none of them appeared to take the view which was held by the Northumberland and Durham miners against legislative interference with the hours of grown-up men. In dealing with the position of the question in Northumberland and Durham, he further showed that, notwithstanding the circular of the leaders opposing the shortening of the hours which had been issued and referred to that day, opinion in Durham had greatly changed among the men, and they had not been deterred in consequence of the adverse representations made against the eight hours' day from joining the Miners' Federation. [Mr. J. WILSON (Durham): "They have decided against the eight hours since!"] While admitting that the majority of the men in Northumberland were against the Bill, yet even there a considerable minority supported it. The objection of the Northumberland and Durham districts was directed solely to the question of lads. It had been shown by the hon. Member for Chester-le-Street on a former occasion that the boys worked ten hours; when they attained the age of 19 or thereabouts they became hewers and worked 6½ hours. It had been shown by the hon. Gentleman that day that the men worked from 5 to 5½ hours; but the hours they had won for themselves by means of their organisation were the shortest hours worked for wages, and they were, besides, short hours accompanied by higher wages. The shortening of the hours of the boys had not been attained by trade union action; the scheme in this direction had failed. The hours worked by the boys were those imposed by law against the wish of the colliery proprietors; but the lads worked ten hours a day in foul air, coal dust, and excessively high temperature, because it would be inconvenient to change a system which admittedly was not satisfactory. It appeared to be thought that some palliation for the long hours of the boys was to be found in the high wages earned; but high wages meant tremendous pressure of work accompanied by an element of danger. The hon. Member for the Chester-le-Street Division had quoted the panegyric passed upon the National Miners' Association by Mr. Keir Hardie, who said that it was the strongest organisation in the world. Bearing in mind the discussions of that Union at Newcastle the other day, he believed that if they could only solve the question of the employment of boys in the northern counties the opposition to the Bill would practically disappear. Several of the delegates spoke at Newcastle in favour of an eight hours' day, and some spoke about the iniquity of lads having to work for ten hours a day. But the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division said that any scheme for reducing the hours of boys, while retaining the benefits which the Durham and Northumberland miners possessed, would be impracticable; that the effect of the change suggested would result in a reduction of the numbers of boys employed, and the families would prefer the retention of the *status quo* rather than see their members scattered about the country. The hon. Member for the Chester-le-Street Division had said on a former occasion that if the present system were changed the boys could not be got for the purpose of equalising the number of shifts of men and boys. He could not see that that was consistent with the view taken by the Labour Members. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division said that the proposed change would result in the reduction of the number of boys. On the other hand, the hon. Member for Chester-le-Street said that the change would involve an increase in the number of boys, and that sufficient boys could not be obtained. Here there was an absolute contradiction. An alternative which had been discussed in that House on a former occasion was three shifts of men and two shifts of boys. His hon. Friend had quoted that day the evidence given before the Labour Commission by the Northumberland and Durham men. They were asked whether it would be practicable to adopt this system, and the reply was that it would not be practicable to get a sufficient number of boys to work under that system. In answer to another question, they said that the hours of the boys were not at all satisfactory, but when they were again asked as to this plan they said, "The plan discussed is two shifts of boys of eight hours each with three shifts of hewers," and they added, "It would be very difficult to obtain a sufficient number of boys." Thus the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division said that the change proposed would reduce the number of boys employed, while the witnesses called by his association before the Labour Commission averred that the change would be impracticable because sufficient boys to carry it into effect could not be obtained. He was glad that nothing had been said that day in favour of the local option system, which had apparently been abandoned by the opponents of the Measure. That the hon. Baronet the Member for Birkenhead should have refrained from moving the Motion which he had placed upon the Paper was some indication of the progress of ideas on this question. It showed that the objection to this legislation was no longer based on the alleged impolicy of interfering with the hours of labour of adult men. The ground was shifted, and the objection was based upon the supposed difficulty of carrying the suggested change into effect. But he could not help thinking that, if the Northumberland and Durham miners would face the matter and consent to take a little trouble, the difficulty would be overcome, believing that the necessary number of boys would be forthcoming.

Sir ELLIOTT LEES explained that he had only refrained from moving his Amendment as a matter of Parliamentary policy, believing that a larger number of votes would be recorded against the Bill on a simple Motion for its rejection.

*Sir C. DILKE said he quite understood the wisdom of the hon. Baronet's tactics, because the cause which he championed was a declining cause, and very few people cared to repeat the academic arguments of former days as to the undesirability of interfering with the hours of labour of grown-up men. The hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division had mentioned the argument as to the probability of strikes to obtain shorter hours in periods of depressed trade. That was the most powerful of all the arguments against the local option proposals, because local option would seem to refer it to the *arbitrium* of strikes all over the country, whether this change should be put into operation or not. There would certainly be a serious risk of strikes all over the country in times of difficulty. The real question at issue in this Bill was not a theoretical one, but the practical one of what was to be done with the Durham and Northumberland boys. He knew there was some difference of opinion among the supporters of the Bill, but what difference of opinion there was it was a mere trifle to the difference of opinion which had been revealed in the speeches made against the Bill on one or two practical points. The local option system, in his opinion, would be most unfair to the coal owners, who would be driven to change their system of working altogether. The Staffordshire and Lancashire owners told them that there would be great practical difficulty in carrying out the Bill, and the owners who were friendly to the Bill all said that they would have to rearrange their working, though they believed in the long run it would not affect the output. The supporters of the Bill had tried to discuss it as a practical Measure, and to abstain from asking for votes under false pretences. They did not want the votes of Gentlemen who voted in favour of the Second Reading in order to redeem some promise made to their constituents, or because they thought it might be the more popular course to take, and having done so, voted against the promoters of the Bill on some critical point in Committee. They had sooner see the Bill lost than carry the Second Reading by the votes of Gentlemen who did not mean to support it. He did not say that the Bill must be carried without the change of a word or a letter, but every Member who desired the Bill to pass knew perfectly well what were the general lines of Amendments concerned with the principle of the Bill and what were not. The main Amendment pointing to local option in districts was one to which in no case the promoters of the Bill could consent. [" Hear, hear ! "]

*Mr. J. WILSON (Durham) said he would be the last person to say that the miners' work was not dangerous, or that the labour of the boys was not hard, because he had done the work and understood it. He had worked amid the dangers that surrounded a miner's life; but this Bill was not promoted for the purpose of lessening those dangers. He remembered that on the last occasion, when a Debate took place in the House on a similar Bill, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham chided the promoters of the Bill with the fact that humanity was entirely lost sight of, and that the whole matter in dispute was the rectification of commercial interests in different districts. A remark had been made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean which he ought not to let pass, although there was a larger amount of truth in it than there ought to be, as to what became of the old men in a mine. A man ought not to be discharged like a worn-out horse simply because he was no longer of use; but it would not be fair that the House should understand that these men were discharged wholesale. Although some were discharged on that account many found work of other kinds about the mine. It would be unjust to the employers of labour in the County of Durham if he allowed it to be understood that every old man was discharged. ["Hear, hear!"] He would like to dispel another impression from the mind of the right hon. Gentleman about explosions happening in the early part of the day. His experience of the County of Durham was that they happened in the night time. They occurred generally when a shift was well worn out. There was another mistake that wanted rectifying, and that was as to the shortening of the miners' hours in 1872. The men's hours were not shortened in consequence of the Bill of 1872. They were shortened in consequence of the strength of the Union. An endeavour was made on the part of the coal owners in the County of Durham to work 12 hours a day, but the Union was rising in its strength, and the men demanded to work only 10 hours a day. Reference had been made to the Royal Commission on Labour, but why did not the representatives of the federation come forward and give evidence before that Commission?

MR. PICKARD: We regarded that Commission as a mere farce.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham) said that however constituted, they ought to have come forward and subjected themselves to cross-examination. Why did not the representatives of the Federation go before the Commission, even if it were partly bogus or entirely bogus? ["Hear, hear!"] The Secretary of the Commission was sitting opposite, and he had no doubt he would give them some enlightenment on this point. A good deal had been said about employers encroaching where the hours had been shortened, but there never had been a single attempt on the part of the employers to encroach on the men in Durham. Therefore he thought there was a delusion on that point. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the demand for the Bill, he denied the statement that there was a growing demand for it. If there was a growing demand for it, where were some of the Members who supported it at the last election? ["Hear, hear!"] There was no greater object lesson than that supplied by the Member for Walthamstow. Therefore, on that ground the demand fell to the ground. What was the standard and test of the men down in their demand? He had no right to speak for the non-unionist, but he had a right to speak for the majority of the men who sent him there to represent them. [*Cheers.*] According to the statement at the Edinburgh Congress, there were 154,000 men in the organisation in the Federation area, but the hon. Member who introduced the Bill had told them that there were 400,000 down in the mines who could speak for the 250,000 who were not in the organisation. Had their view been taken?

MR. PICKARD: It has been taken twice over.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham) ridiculed the idea that the views of the 250,000 men had been ascertained by the organisation. As to the circular which they had seen, it had been got up in a surreptitious manner. The men of Durham in October last decided to join the organisation. He admitted that, but since that time there had been another decision in Durham. He held in his hands the decision that had been arrived at for Durham, and he would like the House to understand the position in which Durham stood. When it was decided to join the Federation it was found that Durham was in a very peculiar position. The Council, represented by 200 delegates from the branches, arrived at this decision in February last. He quoted the exact words:—

> "The Eight Hours' Question—That the county having decided to join the Miners' Federation, and we having been informed that we must agree to support a legislative Eight Hours' Bill as a condition of membership; and as we remember that the county has decided by ballot in 1892, and by resolution in 1895, not to support such a measure, we cannot agree to accept that condition until the county alter the previous resolution on the question, either by Council motion or ballot. Will Delegates come prepared to say what shall be done in this matter? (1) Shall we rescind the previous resolutions? (2) Shall we support an Eight Hours' Bill? (3) Shall a ballot be taken on the subject?—Executive Committee."

The County of Durham had decided through a representation which was purely democratic against the Bill since October—["hear, hear!"]—and here was what they decided:—

> "We adhere to the resolutions now standing in the Association's minute books, viz., that we don't go in for the Parliamentary Eight Hours' Day; and that there be no ballot taken on the question. That the minutes of this meeting be confirmed and signed."

If the House would allow him he would give some reasons for his attitude against this Bill. First, he thought it unwise to pass the Bill considering the diversities of the districts. It was impossible to regulate and make uniform the laws of nature. [*Cheers.*] The emergencies and exigencies of the mining industry demanded a compromise, and a rigid Eight Hours Bill would not suit the interests of the miners. ["Hear, hear!"] In the engineering trade the same machinery almost would be found in every shop in the country; but in mining, the North and the South were totally distinct, and the very terms used in the North were not known in the Midlands or in Wales. ["Hear, hear!"] His position had always been this—he was against legislating for men who had the freedom of combination possessed by the men in this country. [*Cheers.*] If the men's organisation in any district had fairly tried to shorten the hours of labour and had failed, then he would not oppose their coming to the House of Commons. But where had that happened? ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, the organisation must not go to the employers with threats, and, throwing a sword in the scale, say, "That is the balance which you must accept." They must go in a spirit of conciliation and compromise. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for Normanton had referred to one case of failure, but there the Resolution presented to the employers declared that there could be no compromise. It allowed nothing for the technicalities and emergencies of the mine—for the fact that some men worked harder than others. A rigid Eight Hours Bill would be unfair to labour itself. Was it right that a man who worked down the pit in the most cramped position should have to work as long as the man who had easier work in better air? The men with the hardest work should have the shortest hours. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Normanton was at one time a strong opponent of the Bill. He and the hon. Member met in conference, and both argued against the Bill, and when he, with his perseverance, and the hon. Member, with his obstinacy, joined together, they were two stiff obstacles. [*Laughter.*] But the hon. Member had since been converted by the hon. Member for Walthamstow. The hon. Member for Normanton had a colleague at the Edinburgh Conference, Mr. Edward Cowey, who said:—

> "If they went to the State, the men would not do anything for themselves. They had already passed a resolution in favour of gaining the end by organisation, and now they talked about going to Parliament. Why, they would weaken their own position. They could not get the men to work for themselves as long as they thought they could get what they wanted by law."

But, perhaps, Mr. Cowey was also a convert, and he would quote still stronger testimony—that of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, in his book called "The Problems of Greater Britain." In describing the various municipal laws, the right hon. Gentleman wrote:—

> "The Eight Hours' Bill is so universal in Australia that these clauses are not really needed, as the workmen had enforced the complete carrying out of the principle before the custom of asserting them arose. The effect of the eight hours' day has been as satisfactory throughout Australia as in Victoria. As far as Australian example can bear on the English labour problem, it appears to be favourable to the attempt gradually to introduce the eight hours' day in the contracts of the State and of the municipalities."

That was in favour of trade union effort, and directly aganst Parliamentary interference.

*SIR C. DILKE: I hold the same opinion now as I held when I wrote those words.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham) said he simply quoted the words. Of course, the writer might have meant to say something else. [*Laughter.*] To come to Parliament in this matter, with such rights of combination as the workmen enjoyed, was to sap their spirit of manly independence. In times when trade unions were illegal he could understand appeals to Parliament for everything; but such appeals now-a-days only sapped the men's desire for and allegiance to the trade organisations. He would appeal to the hon. Members opposite. Miners' hours were not the only hours which were too long. There were the tramway workers and the shop employés and others, whose hours were in the hands of the hon. Members. Let them begin by dealing with those. There was no man so much a hypocrite as he who wished to put his neighbour's affairs straight while his own were shamefully neglected. [*Cheers and laughter.*]

MR. PICKARD said that so many references to himself had been made that he felt bound to intervene. As to the circular which had been issued, he had simply reprinted what appeared in the Newcastle papers; and he had never written to any secretary in Durham, local or general, for any circular. In connection with that circular, a gentleman named Charlton had been reviled that day as a person incapable of speaking the truth. But Mr. Charlton had repeated in a letter to the newspapers the statements in the circular, and had added that there were 15 persons in and about the House who were self-elected, and had no right whatever to oppose the Bill on anyone's behalf but their own. As far as he could make out, there were no fixed hours in the coal mines of Durham and Northumberland. The Durham miners worked, as stated, seven hours a day, but the fact was the ordinary hands in the mines worked as much as ten hours. It was said that they could not bring the Bill, if it were passed, into operation in Durham. That statement would not hold good. Most of the coals were raised in that county by working three shifts, and of every 1,000 tons of coal brought to the pit's mouth, about 900 tons were produced on the three and four shift system. If such a large percentage of coal was worked in Durham in that way, it was mere subterfuge to say that it would be impossible for other managers to carry out the system they now suggested. Seeing that Durham stood in this unique position—namely, that they dare not re-take a ballot on the hours question, it was rather too late in the day to say that a council meeting or an executive committee meeting should shut the mouth of the democracy of Durham, and prevent them stating to the House and to the country what their real position was. Upwards of 29,000 miners out of 58,000 in Durham had voted for joining the Miners' Federation of Great Britain on the condition that the Federation supported the Eight Hours' Bill. He claimed the neutrals with the majority in that voting. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laughed, but the neutrals were always claimed by the majority in Trade Union matters. [*Laughter.*] For the first time during the last 50 years a geological and geographical argument had been raised with reference to the strata of the mines. That was a matter which the colliery owner was sure to take into consideration when he leased a mine, and as an argument against this Bill it was simply playing with the issue. ["Hear, hear!"] With reference to the question of Trade Union effort, he maintained that the Durham miners had made no headway since 1870, when the boys were working ten hours, just as they were now. Nobody knew better than the Member for Mid-Durham that if a serious attempt was made to get an eight hours day by Trade Union effort, almost every coalfield in the country would be idle. From 1871 to 1897 was a long stretch. Just imagine the Durham leaders striving and disputing with the coalowners during all that time for an eight hours day for boys, and without success. It was enough to make the heart sick. It was make believe to talk now about Trades Union effort, when they found the result at the end of 25 or 26 years was represented by a round O. His belief was that if they obtained an eight hours day by law, it would be much more simple, it would work more easily and with less friction, and it would be better for both coalowners and workmen. There could be no argument against compulsion, for they had compulsion already. Every man had now to remain in the mine a certain number of hours. In regard to the contention that there was no contracting-out in Durham, he said there was in this sense, that when the men suffered injury while riding the trams in the mine they could not sue for compensation under the Employers' Liability Act.

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham): If the hon. Gentleman will allow me I will explain.

Mr. PICKARD: I do not think I ought to allow you. [*Laughter.*] The fact he had mentioned had been brought to his knowledge years ago and could not be disputed. The Bill, if passed into law, would give to the workers of this country everything they had been hoping for for at least two generations. They wanted a shorter day, and they would continue to work for it by legal effort. Their friends in Durham, according to their own showing, enjoyed about three or four hours more leisure than did the men whom he represented, and it was an odd thing that they should try and prevent others from obtaining by law what they had themselves got by some other process. He thought the shorter hours of the Durham and Northumberland men were obtained by means of the double shift system and not by trade union effort. The Mining Association of Great Britain were the opponents of this Bill, and they had instructed hon. Members of that House to oppose the Bill in every possible way. He had been informed, however, that the chairman of that association believed in the principle of this Bill; if that were so he occupied an awkward position. Suppose that the hours of labour were limited by one hour a day, and that they had a thousand men killed every year at present, one-tenth of that number would not be killed, simply because they would not be in the mines, and would not, therefore, be exposed to the danger. The House had read a Bill similar to this one two or three times, and he appealed to the House to take this opportunity of settling the question. He contended that Liberal seats were lost at the last election in connection with the Liquor Traffic Bill, and not in connection with the Eight Hours' Bill. The Liberals at all events ought not to attribute the loss of seats to their attempt to ameliorate the condition of the workers. He cordially supported the Motion, and he trusted that the Bill would pass the Second Reading.

Mr. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, Newton) said this Bill had been debated very fully on previous occasions, and it was practically impossible to say anything fresh on the subject. He ventured to think that they heard too much about the case of Durham and Northumberland, more especially in view of the obvious fact that the shorter hours of the men there were obtained by making the boys work longer. It was contended that an eight hours Bill practically was universally desired by the miners in England; that was a contention which for his part he was not in the least disposed to accept. The modest estimate of the promoters of this Bill was, he thought, that at least 90 per cent. of the miners were in its favour. He observed that amongst the promoters there appeared for the first time the name of an owner, the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Derbyshire; he was curious to know whether that hon. Member had introduced an eight hours bank to bank day in his own pit.

Mr. T. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): If you mean me, my name has been on the back of the Bill every year.

Mr. LEGH: Has the hon. Member introduced an eight hours' bank to bank day in his own colliery?

Mr. BAYLEY: I should be only too delighted to do so if all the other colliery owners would do it. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LEGH asked why the hon. Member was so backward in regard to the matter? [*Laughter.*]

Mr. BAYLEY said he might also ask why other owners were so backward in setting an example.

Mr. LEGH, continuing, said it was several years ago since a ballot on this question had been taken, and he could quite understand that many Members might not wish to appear in opposition to the policy of their union. Hon. Members opposite seemed to have curious views in regard to the value of the ballot, for a year or two ago, when a ballot was taken of the servants of the London and North Western Railway with regard to a particular question, they were told that that was a frivolous expression of opinion. He preferred himself to take a Parliamentary election as a test. The hon. Member for Walthamstow, who was a sort of apostle of the eight hours' movement in that part of Lancashire where he resided, when he stood for a constituency composed almost entirely of colliers was not returned.

MR. WOODS: I was returned by another place. [*Opposition cheers.*]

MR. LEGH said the hon. Member was not returned by a mining constituency, however, because the Eight Hours' Bill was extremely unpopular there. ["Hear, hear!"] If colliers were so unanimously in favour of the proposal, how was it they had not obtained what they wanted by private arrangement? It was idle to say that the Mining Federation were too weak to obtain what they asked for. There was no trade union more powerfully constituted, which had more able men at the head of it, or more loyally supported by well-disciplined and energetic men. If the coalminers were absolutely unanimous in their demand, how could a few hundred masters stand out against a general demand for an eight hours' day. The power of the Mining Federation had been shown over and over again. They could move their men in and out of the pits like an army of soldiers. The main argument in favour of the Bill was that it would promote greater safety. It was based on the fallacy that a coal pit was a place where the men went to idle away time and amuse themselves. The object of every man who descended the pits was to come out as quickly as possible, but to earn as much as possible while there. If Parliament diminished the period during which a man was below ground, the miner, in his desire to earn as much as he could in the time, would take fewer precautions to insure safety. The majority of accidents were not caused by explosions, but falls of roof, which would be multiplied if the men's time for securing their safety were diminished. If diminished hours brought increased safety why did not hon. Members opposite agitate for 48 hours work per week. It had been maintained by the Mover of the Bill that the output of coal would not be reduced if the hours of labour in mines were limited. But not long ago one of his friends, the hon. Member for Walthamstow, advocated this Bill on the very ground that it would reduce the annual output twenty million tons, and the hon. Member for Rhondda said he was prepared to support the Bill for that reason if for no other. In 1892 the subject of an eight hours' day for miners was made a test question. But in 1895 it did not figure at all in the election address of his opponent. He himself believed this was one of the agitations which depended entirely on whether trade was good. If it was good the men and their leaders thought they could indulge in experiments of this kind. The advocates of the Bill refused to see that there would be danger from foreign competition if the Bill were passed. When a deputation to Lord Rosebery pointed out the great impetus which would be given to Belgian trade if the Bill were passed, Lord Rosebery said that Belgium had just adopted universal franchise, and was it to be supposed, he asked, that the Belgians would go on working long hours when they had this? The hon. Member for Walthamstow, when asked whether there was not some danger of British trade being transferred to the Continent if this Bill passed, said, "Oh, no, there is not the least danger of anything of the kind. There is a Coal Porters' Union, and they will refuse to unload any coal that might arrive from foreign ports." So that these were to be the bulwarks of British trade —universal franchise in Belgium and the Coal Porters' Union in this country. It was admitted that many pits would have to be closed and men thrown out of employment if the Bill was passed. He was as much in sympathy with shortening hours of labour as anyone. The only difficulty was how it was to be done. He believed the Bill would inflict the most serious injury on a most important industry, and would prejudice the interests of those whom it was intended to benefit, and therefore he should oppose it.

MR. E. BAINBRIDGE (Lincoln, Gainsborough) said it was very important to understand how many the Bill would affect, and those who had not tried the experiment were not in a position to know. He had tried the experiment and wished to bring the result before the House, for he considered it would be a great advantage for Members to know how many miners were really affected. About 700,000 men and boys were employed. Of these about 200,000 belonged to districts that were opposed to the Bill. That left 500,000, and of those there were 250,000 who worked at the "coal face," and 250,000 who had the ordinary work of miners to perform. These stood in relation to the workmen of the country, who numbered 13 millions, at about 5 per cent. If the Bill could be shown to be no advantage to the men it was intended to help, and a disadvantage to the rest of the community, it ought to be condemned. In 1894 he tried the experiment at three different collieries to see whether the contention was correct or not that such a Bill would not affect the output. Those three experiments showed a reduction of 22 per cent. in one colliery, 32½ at another, and 23½ at a third. He asserted, without fear of contradiction, that, whether the result would generally be 20 per cent., or 10 per cent., the effect would be materially to increase the price of coal to every consumer in the country. An increase of 6d. per ton would mean an increase of £4,500,000 per annum. He thought the Bill would have the effect of absolutely damaging the men's interest, raising the price of coal to consumers, and bringing harm to the industries of the country, and he should therefore oppose it.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Rhondda Valley), in supporting the Bill, said South Wales was the most dangerous mining district in the kingdom, and there, according to the hon. Member for Merthyr, men were kept at work in the pits as long as 12 hours a day.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 186; Noes, 227.—(Division List, No. 190—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arch, Joseph
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. Blair (Clackm)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colville, John
Compton, Earl (Barnsley)
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh)
Denny, Colonel
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doughty, George
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fielden, Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Hy. (Wolt'n)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greville, Captain
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harrison, Charles
Harwood, George
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, James Henry Cecil
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.

Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon, James
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Labouchere, Henry
Langley, Batty
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Jas. W. (Cumberland)
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Marks, Henry Hananel
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Milton, Viscount
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, Rt. Hn. Sir G. O. (Denbs.)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Muntz, Philip A.
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spencer, Ernest
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Strachey, Edward
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsf'ld)
Woods, Samuel
Wylie, Alexander
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. William Allen and Mr. Jacoby.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Anstruther, H. T.
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerld. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Brymer, William Ernest
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Darling, Charles John
Davies, Horatio D. (Chatham)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fenwick, Charles
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hall, Sir Charles
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence

Haslett, Sir James Horner
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Heath, James
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holden, Angus
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kimber, Henry
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legh, Hon. Thomas W. (Lanc.)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swans'a)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Maclure, John William
McEwan, William
McIver, Sir Lewis
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (M'ntr'se)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Oldroyd, Mark
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Priestley, Sir W. Overend (Edin.)
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Rankin, James
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenh'm)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Stanley, Edwd. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE NOES,
Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Joseph A. Pease.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.—Second Reading put off for six months.

BOILER INSPECTION AND REGISTRATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LAW OF LIBEL AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 19th May.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 2nd June.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 19th May.

INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT AND INCORPORATED BUILDING SOCIETIES (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 2nd June.

TEIND COURT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MARINERS' VOTES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 1st June.

RESTRAINT OF EVICTIONS (LONDON) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 3rd June.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNTY COUNCIL CLERKS) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 2nd June.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

CEMETERIES RATING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 19th May.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed for To-morrow.

POLICE PENSIONS AND SERVICE BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 2nd June.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 4th June.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 3rd June.

TRAWLERS' LICENSING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

APPOINTMENT OF HIGH SHERIFFS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 1st June.

SUCCESSION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday, 28th May.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 31st May.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 31st May.

TOWN HOLDINGS (TENANTS' COMPENSATION) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 2nd June.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, next.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

ESTATES TAIL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 13th May.

BAKEHOUSES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 27th May.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned till To-morrow.

SALE OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

CANALS AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

CHAFF-CUTTING MACHINES ACCIDENTS BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed for Monday next.

MERSEY CHANNELS BILL.

Considered in Committee and reported, without Amendment; to be Read the Third time upon Friday.

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 25th May.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday, 27th May.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Mr. John Edward Ellis to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House Adjourned at Ten Minutes before Six o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 6th May 1897.

QUARTER SESSIONS JURORS (IRELAND) BILL.

The Earl of DENBIGH in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that the object of the Bill was to relieve jurors summoned to try criminal cases from attending the Courts of Quarter Sessions in Ireland when there was no criminal business for them to transact. The Bill had been passed through the House of Commons unopposed and without Amendment. It had been introduced by Her Majesty's Government in response to many representations of the great inconvenience frequently caused to jurors. Obviously to many quarter sessions divisions of Ireland the Bill would be in no way applicable, because there was invariably criminal business to be done in the large towns. It was provided, therefore, that the Lord Lieutenant might specify the different divisions to which the Bill should apply. In those divisions notice of a Bill of Indictment to be presented must be given to the Clerk of the Peace at least three days before the Sessions, and in the absence of any such notice the Sheriff would notify the jurors that they were exempted from attendance. It was also provided that the Chairman of Quarter Sessions might adjourn the trial of any person in respect of whose indictment notice has not been lodged to the next Quarter Sessions or Assizes. Possibly one or two Amendments might be found desirable, but he anticipated no difficulty.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) asked whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland had been communicated with in connection with the Bill, which effected a serious change? The fact that the Bill was not discussed in the other House hardly recommended its acceptance unquestioningly.

The Earl of DENBIGH said that the Bill was promoted by the Irish Office. Last year the Bill was introduced as a private Measure, but certain objections were raised, and now the Bill had been taken up by the Government and its provisions had been modified to meet the objections. He believed that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland had had the Bill before him and had approved of it.

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday next.

House Adjourned at Twenty Minutes before Five o'Clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Ten o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 6th May 1897.

QUESTIONS.

CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS.

Mr. S. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether clerks of the abstractor class receive less annual increment of salary than temporary boy copyists serving under them; and whether, having regard to the long service of these clerks and their low maximum salary, he can see his way to increase their annual increment?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): A boy copyist is a temporary and unestablished employé, who under the present regulations cannot be appointed under 15 years of age or retained as such after 20. His ordinary pay is 14s. a week, rising by 1s. a week each year to a maximum of 18s. His increment is therefore £2 12s. a year. The old class of men abstractors, on the other hand, are permanent and established officers. As I have several times explained, they originally belonged to the class of men copyists which the Ridley Commission recommended should be abolished, but the Treasury in 1891 gave a number of them permanent employment on elementary clerical work as abstractors, with a title to pension and other advantages, allowing them to commence at their existing rates of pay (as a rule between £90

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

and £100 a year) and to rise by annual increments of £2 10s. to a maximum of £150. It is the fact, therefore, that the boy copyists' increment, while it lasts, is 2s. a year more than the abstractor's; but it only lasts four years at most, whereas the abstractors' last more than 20 years as a rule, and the hon. Member will see that there is really no comparison possible between the two classes. The abstractor class has only been in existence six years, and therefore none of the clerks can be said to have had a "long service" as abstractors. Any previous service must have been temporary and unestablished in the capacity of copyist, and it is obvious that as abstractors the men are in a far better position than they could ever have attained as copyists. Their maximum salary of £150 was fixed in consideration of the rudimentary character of their work, and the same consideration debars the Government from increasing the annual increment.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether the Lords Commissioners recently received a petition from the abstractor clerks in the Civil Service asking for an increase of pay commensurate with the duties devolving on them; whether an abstractor, who had served many years and had a salary over £100 per annum, had to submit to a large reduction on becoming a permanent second-class clerk; and, will the Treasury do anything to remove the grievance complained of?

Mr. HANBURY: Several such petitions have been received, but I am of opinion that the abstractors' pay is sufficient for the work they have to do. Abstractors are survivors of the old copyist class, and the Ridley Commission contemplated that they should be swept away. Instead of this they were formed into a new class with increased pay, pension rights, and other advantages. It was not intended that they should have prospects of promotion to the second division, for which they have passed no adequate examination. By Order in Council an entrant to the second division must commence at a salary of £70, and the Treasury has no power to override the order. If, therefore, such an appointment is offered to an abstractor he must choose between his actual pay (but without prospects of advancement) and the lower commencing salary, but greatly improved prospects of the second division. It would neither be reasonable nor conducive to the harmonious working of a department to pay him a salary 50 per cent. higher than that of the junior second division clerks, who would have entered the second division at the same time or even before him, and would be working side by side with him at the same work.

VACCINATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Mr. C. J. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the sixth volume of the Report of the Royal Commission on Vaccination, containing the evidence taken so long ago as in 1891, is in the hands of the printers; and, if so, whether he is in a position to state when it will be delivered to Members?

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): As I stated in reply to a question on Friday last, I am informed that the volume is now in the printers' hands and will be issued as soon as the lithographs accompanying it are ready. I can give no more definite information on the subject.

STRIKE AT NORWICH (INTIMIDATION).

Mr. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the charge to the grand jury by the Recorder of Norwich on 14th April, as reported by the *Eastern Daily Press*, in which, referring to a case of alleged intimidation in connection with a strike in the shoe trade in that city, the Recorder, after stating that he purposely refrained from reading anything about the strike, immediately went on to describe the conduct of the persons charged as abominable tyranny; and, whether, having regard to the fact that such language was calculated to prejudice the case in the minds of the grand jury, he will remit the remainder of the sentence of one month's hard labour?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): The hon. Member has been good enough to send me the newspaper report to which he alludes, but there are no grounds, so far as I can see, for interfering with the sentence. The verdict of guilty on which the sentence was passed was, of course, as the hon. Member is aware, the verdict of the petty jury, and no complaint is made as to the manner in which the case was put before them by the Recorder.

ARMY SCHOOLMASTERS.

Mr. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, in view of the facts that, on the promulgation of the warrant of 1st July, 1881, the rank of warrant officer was granted to all bandmasters then serving, but to those schoolmasters only who had served for 12 years before that date, although prior to the warrant in question all Army schoolmasters were senior in rank to bandmasters; that the rank of warrant officer is now granted to all bandmasters on appointment, but to schoolmasters only after eight years' service; and that schoolmasters under present conditions must often remain in the fourth class of warrant officers till the end of service, frequently for a period of 20 years; whether he will consider the propriety of extending to all Army schoolmasters the opportunity for promotion to higher grades which is now available for warrant officers of the Royal Artillery, Army Service Corps, and Army Ordnance Corps on satisfactorily completing a specified period in one rank?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The position of Army schoolmasters has only recently been improved, and the Secretary of State is not prepared to reopen the question.

POSTMEN (NOTTINGHAM).

Mr. YOXALL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, why it is that the postmen of Nottingham, employed as they are in the eighth of the largest towns in the United Kingdom, are not placed on the first provincial scale of pay, and whether he will consider the propriety of placing the Nottingham postmen on that scale?

Mr. HANBURY: There are only three towns in England, Liverpool (including Birkenhead), Manchester and Birmingham, which are placed on the first provincial scale of pay. These towns have populations of 617,000 505,000, and 478,000, while Nottingham is under 214,000.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

Mr. A. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to provide seats for the acting magistrates of the County of Middlesex to view the Queen's Jubilee Procession?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am afraid that I cannot comply with the hon. Member's request. It is not a matter in which I have any power or authority.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether the same privilege can be given to Members of this House to purchase five tickets for seats to view the Procession which has been granted to members of the Civil Service?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. A. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): Every available space will be brought into requisition, and I fear it is impossible to comply with the request of my hon. Friend unless the extra space be obtained at the expense of the officials of this House or of the members of the Press attached to the House, an expedient which I feel certain he would not desire. I have no knowledge of the fact mentioned by my hon. Friend. Stands are being erected by the Office of Works for various departments of the Civil Service; but I must disclaim all responsibility for the distribution of tickets, which has been left in every case to the discretion of the head of the Department concerned. If the facts are as described by my hon. Friend, either the head of the Department in question has not complied with my request to limit his demand for seats to moderate limits, or an unequal distribution of tickets must have been made in favour of one and at the expense of another class of officials in the Department.

ACHILL ISLAND.

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolution of the Westport Board of Guardians on the 29th ultimo, in which they state that the relief (outdoor) given to landholders in Achill is now so great that most of the relief given will be charged to the union at large, where the ratepayers are already overtaxed; will he take some measures to relieve the ratepayers of this burden; and is he aware that, according to the report of the relieving officer for Achill Island, only eight persons were employed on the relief works at Keel, Achill?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds Central): I have received a copy of the resolution referred to. There seems to be no reason to apprehend that the cost of the outdoor relief, if it is judiciously administered, will involve a heavier charge upon the rates than the ratepayers will be able to meet, and the necessity for Government assistance has not arisen. There are no relief works in operation at Keel, but a pier is under construction there, which affords employment to eight persons, and I understand that an additional number of persons from the locality will shortly be employed.

ACCOUNTS OFFICE (INDIA).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the Circular, dated 11th January, 1897, and issued at the instance of Sir James Westland by the Comptroller General of India to his nine subordinates, with reference to the appointment of a number of higher classed clerks, at salaries of 60 rupees and upwards per month, to the Accounts Office; and whether these selections are to be made without the test of examination, and from among Europeans and Eurasians; and whether the reason assigned by the Finance Minister for such a step is to prevent the offices being filled with Bengalese exclusively?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have not seen the Circular itself, but I have read the reference to it in the Proceedings of the Legislative Council on March 13 and 27, and the Orders of Government therein mentioned. These Orders state that, the appointments being probationary, there is an opportunity to select for the higher posts either graduates or others qualified by their education, or candidates from other branches of the service. It is pointed out that promotion from the lower grades is in no way forbidden, but that "by confining the higher appointments too narrowly to persons who have entered the service in the lower grades, the very classes of natives among whom the best and most competent officers are likely to be found are excluded."

LONGFORD CANAL HARBOUR.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he has received a copy of a rider attached to the verdict of a coroner's jury in the case of an inquest on the remains of Michael M'Nally, who was found drowned in the canal harbour at Longford on the 23rd April, in which they state their belief that this man met his death principally owing to the unprotected state of the canal harbour there; and (2) whether, seeing that this is the sixth person drowned in this harbour inside five years, he will consider the Canal and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Bill with a view to assisting the passage into law of some measure to compel canal companies to properly enclose, for the protection of the public, such harbours.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The finding of the coroner's jury has been communicated to the Midland Great Western Railway Company, who have promised to give the matter their consideration. Such a measure as that referred to in the second paragraph, if passed at all, should, in my judgment, apply to the whole of the United Kingdom.

RATES (IRELAND).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he has received copies of resolutions recently adopted by the Oldcastle and Bailieborough Boards of Guardians calling on the Government to extend to Ireland the same treatment in the matter of relief of rates as England got under the Land Rating Bill of last year; and (2) whether he can make any statement on the subject.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Copies of the resolution referred to in the first paragraph have been received. The question is one for the Treasury to deal with.

LAND COMMISSION.

MR. J. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why only ten cases were listed for hearing on the last occasion on which the Land Commissioners sat at Larne, while many other cases in which application had been made in October last were not dealt with; and when a Commission will again sit at Larne?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The last list for the Larne Union contained all applications to fix fair rents for a first statutory term which were received in the office of the Land Commission on or before 24th October, 1896, and all similar applications for a second statutory term received prior to 9th October, 1896. At the time the Larne list was prepared, the Commissioners were unable to list cases from that Union beyond the dates above specified, having regard to the number of cases then being remitted to the Sub-Commissions from the different districts. The Commissioners will arrange a sitting at Larne on as early a date as possible consistent with the claims of other districts.

MR. DILLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman able to mention any date approximately?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, I am afraid that I cannot do so.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the case of tenants who obtain a reduction in their purchase annuities under Sub-Section (5) of Section 25 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, for how many years will it be necessary for them to pay the reduced annuity before their capital liability to the State is extinguished?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: For some years to come the tenants who will obtain reductions under Sub-Section (5) of Section 25 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, will be those only to whom advances were made under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885, and previous Purchase Acts. The effect of the reduction in these cases at the end of each decade will be to extend the term for 49 years, provided the annuity remains 4 per cent. on the amount of the advance on each such occasion ascertained to be unpaid, and that the interest portion of the annuity continues as hitherto at $3\frac{1}{8}$ per cent.

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

MR. J. McKILLOP (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that privileges and exemptions are enjoyed by Members of Parliament representing English and Welsh constituences that are not extended to Parliamentary Representatives in Scotland, and if he will, at a convenient opportunity, take means to have this grievance removed, and place all Parliamentary Members on an equal footing?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I understand that the Question of my hon. Friend refers to the fact that there is an Act (33 and 34 Vict. c. 77) exempting Members of Parliament representing English and Welsh constituencies from serving on Juries, and that there is no such Act applying to Scotland. I shall take the matter into consideration; and I shall be glad at a convenient opportunity to endeavour to redress the grievance of my hon. Friend.

WEST INDIA COMMISSIONERS.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state how soon the West India Commissioners are likely to issue their Report, and whether, in view of the precarious condition of the sugar industry by reason of the new bounties and the new American tariff, he will invite them to report within this month, or before the discussion on the Budget closes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The West India Commissioners, who have just returned from visiting all the West Indian Colonies, have brought with them a mass of oral and documentary evidence, and are still awaiting further returns and documents from the Colonies and the United States. They are fully alive to the importance of Dispatch, but in view of the wide scope of the Inquiry, and the variety of important subjects which it embraces and the great amount of evidence to be dealt with, they cannot hope to submit their Report for at least eight or ten weeks from the present time.

CANADIAN TARIFF.

MR. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in consequence of the recent action of the Canadian Government in proposing to remove the duties hitherto imposed in Canada on English imported merchandise, Her Majesty's Government, in considering the advisability of denouncing the treaties of commerce at present existing between this country, France, and Belgium respectively, as being under these circumstances inconsistent with the Favoured Nations Clause of such treaties?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The matter is receiving the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government, but I am unable at present to make any statement with regard to it.

PENNY POSTAGE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in face of the contention put forward by the postal authorities that the British Colonies, or some of them, object to the institution of Imperial penny postage from this country to the rest of the Empire, and in view of the offer of the hon. Member for Canterbury to furnish an absolute and incontestable refutation of that contention, he will appoint a small independent Committee to investigate and finally determine this question and report thereupon, and so put it beyond all doubt, and further to ascertain and report upon any further objection, if any, which can be raised to the establishment of Imperial penny postage or ocean penny postage to all parts of the Empire?

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Member is incorrect in saying that the British Colonies have been represented by the Post Office as objecting to the institution of Imperial penny postage from this country to the rest of the Empire. Their objection has been to a penny postage from the Colonies to this country, many of them having an internal rate much above a penny, and bearing the loss of revenue which would therefore follow. The objection to an Imperial penny post, even if it were limited to mails going only to the Colonies from England, would come, not from the Colonies, but from foreign States over whose railways these mails would pass at a rate much below the 2½d. paid for mails to those countries themselves. The objections to ocean penny postage from this country to the Colonies, but not from the Colonies to this country, which is the latest modification of the hon. Member's proposals, can be better stated in a discussion on the Vote than in the narrow limits of a reply to a Question on the Paper.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON said that he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman what objection he had to an Inquiry by an independent Committee as to the objections raised by the Colonies to the establishment of an Imperial penny postage. Would the right hon. Gentleman consent to an independent Inquiry on the subject?

MR. HANBURY: No. I have already said that the Colonies do not object to a penny post from this country.

MR. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.), asked whether it was the fact that the Australian Colonies objected to an Imperial penny post on the ground of the large number of letters they would have to distribute in Australia?

MR. HANBURY : No. I understand that the principal objection that comes from the Colonies has been to a penny post from the Colonies to this country. I am not aware of any objection raised by the Colonies to a penny post from this country to the Colonies.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON : May I be allowed to say in a few words that the Colonies offer no objection——[*Cries of* "Order."]

RIVER SUCK DRAINAGE.

MR. D. KILBRIDE (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the amount of the advances made by the Commissioners of Public Works (Ireland) to the River Suck Drainage Board prior to the passing of The River Suck Drainage Act, 1886, and the amount of the advances made between that date and the passing of the River Suck Drainage Act, 1889?

MR. HANBURY: The answer is £45,000 in each case; total, £90,000.

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) what is the total amount of the loans made by the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, to the River Suck Drainage Board; (2) on what terms as to repayment was the money advanced; (3) what sum was given by way of free grant to the Board; (4) what was the total value of the lands situated within the improvement area prior to the commencement of drainage works; (5) what is the addition to said total value resulting from the execution of the drainage works; (6) what are the amounts payable annually by the occupiers and proprietors respectively; (7) and on what basis has the apportionment as between occupiers and proprietors been made?

MR. HANBURY: The total amount advanced has been £122,802 9s. 8d., of which sum there is chargeable on the County Cess £1,815 for bridges (already repaid) and £13,000 under the Act of 1889. The terms of repayment are by annuity of £4 10s. per cent. (covering principal and interest) for forty years, as laid down by the Acts of 1889 and 1890. The amount of the free grant is £50,000. The original value of the 16,500 acres improved, as put forward by the promoters of the drainage scheme in 1877 and revised by the Inspector who held the Inquiry under the Drainage Acts, was £6,176 14s. per annum. The additional value resulting from the works is £3,013 12s. 2d. per annum. The annual charge is £3,013 12s. 2d. on the occupiers, and £3,189 15s. 8d. on the proprietors. The hon. Member will see that the charge on the occupiers represents the actual improvement to the lands. The charge on the proprietors represents the sum which will repay in forty years the balance of the advances, *i.e.*, the unremunerative expenditure, including interest during construction, but excluding of course the amounts chargeable on the County Cess.

MR. KILBRIDE asked whether the £3,189 now charged to the owner meant that the occupier got no corresponding advantage whatever for it?

MR. HANBURY: No, I think it is purely unremunerative.

MANURES (GALWAY AND MAYO).

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to the fact that the lands of the small holders in the counties of Galway and Mayo are being seriously deteriorated by the continued use of artificial manures; and (2) whether he will use his influence with the railway companies, whose train service touches the seaboard of those counties, to reduce the rates charged for the carriage of sea-sand and sea-weed, so that these permanently beneficial manures may be made more generally available.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My attention has not been specially directed to the fact mentioned in the first paragraph. If, however, any representations are addressed to me on the subject I will be prepared to communicate them to the railway company concerned, though I have no means of exercising any influence in the direction suggested.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, why letters arriving at Pettigo at 7 p.m. by the mail car from Bundoran and Ballyshannon are not delivered till 7 a.m. the day following, a reply by the return mail car which leaves Pettigo at 6 a.m. being thus rendered impossible by the detention for twelve hours of the letters in the post office at Pettigo; and, whether steps will be taken to remove this inconvenience and hindrance to business?

Mr. HANBURY: Inquiry is being made on this subject, and the Postmaster General will communicate the result to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Mr. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, in view of the railway service which now exists between Ballina and Killala, in the county Mayo, he could arrange that the mails for Killala and the surrounding districts should be carried by rail to and from Killala, instead of by one-horse car to and from Ballina as at present; and whether he could make arrangements that the limited mail day train service should be extended to Killala?

Mr. HANBURY: Although there is now a railway between Ballina and Killala, there are no trains running morning and evening which could be substituted with advantage for the mail car, and the establishment of trains at hours specially suited for the mail—that is, the night mail—would not be warranted. The existing night mail service is already carried on at a considerable loss to the revenue; and as regards the extension of the limited day mail service to Killala, it is regretted the answer must be in the negative. There are no trains between Ballina and Killala in connection with the limited day mail, even if a margin of revenue were available for the extension of that mail.

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.

Mr. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether the London Hospital Medical School was registered under 39 and 40 Vic. cap. 77, in the years 1895 and 1896 for the performance of experiments on living animals; (2) whether the Government Inspector in his Report, dated the 5th of July, 1896, stated "that the names of all those 'licensed places' to which licenses were accredited are given in the tables"; and, (3) whether, having regard to the fact that the London Hospital has been omitted from the tables of the Government Inspector's Report for the year 1895, the Home Secretary will order an amended Report of the Experiments on Living Animals to be issued which shall be accurate?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The answer to the two first paragraphs is in the affirmative. There has been no inaccuracy, however, in the return. The hon. Member will find the London Hospital mentioned in the foot notes to Table 1, on pages 13 and 15. I must certainly decline to issue an amended table; but to meet what I imagine are the hon. Member's wishes, I have directed that in future returns all registered premises shall appear in the body of the table, whether any experiments are performed in them or not.

WATTISFIELD TOWN ESTATE CHARITY, SUFFOLK.

Mr. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Thirsk Division of Yorkshire, as a Charity Commissioner, with regard to the new scheme which has been issued for the Wattisfield Town Estate Charity, Suffolk, dividing the charity originally left for the use and benefit of the inhabitants into one-third ecclesiastical and two-thirds general, although for the last 25 years less than one-sixth of the income has been used for ecclesiastical purposes, whether he is aware that the rector of the parish, besides being, with the churchwardens, sole trustee of the ecclesiastical part, has been constituted perpetua *x-officio* trustee of the non-ecclesiastical part; that the parish council has strongly protested against the scheme; and that this protest has been endorsed by the parish meeting and a memorial signed by 80 out of 100 householders in the parish; and, if these facts are correct, do the Commissioners intend to modify the scheme to meet the views of the inhabitants of the parish?

Mr. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R. Thirsk): No scheme has been made under the Charitable Trusts' Acts. The endowment being held in part for ecclesiastical purposes, an Order for its apportionment and management was made under the Local Government Act, 1894, Section 75; the Order was settled with special reference to the fact that payments have from time to time been made by the Trustees for a great number of years for exceptional expenses in connection with the Church; the other facts stated in the Question are substantially correct, though a memorial in support of the Order was received from 28 persons describing themselves as the principal landowners in the parish; the Commissioners made the Order after giving very careful consideration to all the circumstances and after a local inquiry by an Assistant Commissioner and cannot modify it; the Order is, however, subject to appeal to the High Court, under the conditions presented by Section 70 (2) Local Government Act.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say for what purpose police constables are required to attend the arrival of passenger trains at the various railway stations throughout Ireland; whether he is aware that in the case of country stations compliance with this rule frequently entails a journey of many miles a day; and whether he will suggest to the Irish Constabulary authorities the desirability of discontinuing the practice?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The police attend the arrival and departure of trains in the ordinary discharge of their duty, though it is only when they are quartered within half a mile of the railway station that they are required, as of course, to be in attendance on all trains. This duty has been performed by the police for very many years, and I see no reason for discontinuing it now.

MR. DILLON: Why is it necessary to have two constables at every railway station in Ireland, while it is not necessary in this country?

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) asked whether it was not the fact that in this country the railway companies paid for what police service they required in their stations?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, but I may remind the hon. Member that the police are paid for in Ireland by the Government.

PARISH COUNCILS.

*MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, if he is aware that in several instances the retiring chairman of a parish council has enabled the minority of a newly elected council to appoint the chairman for the ensuing year by giving two votes, although not himself a member of the new council; and, whether this defect can be remedied by an order of the Local Government Board; and, if so, will he advise the Board to adopt that course; and, if not, will he induce the Government to give facilities for the passing of a short Act to amend this flaw in the Local Government Act of 1894.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Local Government Board has been advised that the effect of the provisions in the Local Government Act, 1894, is that the outgoing chairman remains in office until his successor is elected and that whilst in office he retains all his powers and therefore is enabled to give a vote and a casting vote on the question of the election of his successor, and that this is so although he himself may not be at the time a member of the council. The hon. Member has drawn attention to a case where the result has been as stated in the Question, but I have no information as to the extent to which similar instances have occurred. The Local Government Board are not empowered to make any order in the matter, and I cannot hold out any expectation that the Government will introduce legislation on the subject.

*MR. LOGAN said the matter was one of great importance, and he asked the Government whether they would give facilities to pass a short Bill to do away with this gross injustice.

*MR. SPEAKER ruled that the Question had already been answered.

TELEGRAPH WIRES (CITY OF LONDON).

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that some want of agreement between the Post Office and the Commissioners of Sewers in London is causing great inconvenience and expense to private persons and firms, who are unable to get telegraph wires introduced or transferred to their premises by reason of the refusal of the Commissioners to allow the ground to be opened; and whether, in addition to the postal and telegraphic reforms promised in the Budget, the Postmaster General will take steps to overcome the results arising from the disagreement referred to?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is aware that inconvenience is being caused to private persons and firms by the refusal of the Commissioners of Sewers to give consent to open the ground for the provision or transference of wires to their premises. Powers have been conferred by Parliament on the Postmaster General to carry out works of this kind subject to the consent of the authorities controlling the streets, and he has a right of appeal to a legal tribunal, and in the final result to the Railway Commissioners against the refusal of consent. The Postmaster General is now considering what steps he should take in the public interest; but he trusts he will not be compelled to resort to appeal. The Commissioners of Sewers have in the past done what they could to facilitate the operations of the Post Office, and have shown the Department every courtesy.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS (City of London) asked whether the Treasury would grant the Inquiry into the matters in dispute that the Commissioners of Sewers had asked for?

Mr. HANBURY said that he did not think an Inquiry was necessary. It really was a legal question. It was clear that the Post Office had a right of appeal, and, if the consent of the Commissioners was refused, they could carry on the appeal.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS asked whether it was not a fact that the disagreement arose from the Post Office having obtained permission to break the streets for their own purposes, and having used it for the purpose of the National Telephone Company, and having refused to undertake that they would not again do so?

Mr. HANBURY said he had made special inquiries about this. The position was this. By an agreement made when the trunk wires were taken over from the National Telephone Company by the Government, it was stipulated under that agreement that the Post Office should lay the main wires between the exchanges of the National Telephone Company at their own cost. That agreement was sanctioned by Parliament. If any wires in connection with the Company were so laid by the Post Office, the arrangement was strictly limited to those main wires.

Mr. LOUGH said that the difficulty of the Commission of Sewers was not absolutely confined to telephone wires, and that his question was confined to telegraph wires.

Mr. HANBURY: But the difficulty is that, if two sets of wires have to be laid, it is an advantage to the local authorities that they should be laid at the same time.

JURORS (CO. TYRONE).

Mr. G. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that to hold Crown Sessions in Strabane will very largely increase the number of attendances of jurors required at Quarter Sessions from the divisions of Omagh, Strabane, and Clogher, County Tyrone; that the consolidation of these divisions for Crown Sessions was effected in 1876, in pursuance of instructions from the Government, with the object of reducing the number of jurors required, their attendance having been shortly before rendered compulsory under a penalty and in alphabetical rotation; whether two memorials similar to that now before the Lord Lieutenant have been considered by the Privy Council and rejected; and whether any further steps will be taken without consulting the jurors whom the proposed change would affect.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: With reference to this Question, I have to observe that the memorial recently addressed to the Lord Lieutenant in favour of the re-establishment of Crown Sessions at Strabane, has been considered by the Privy Council, who have declined to comply with the application.

BRIGADE OF GUARDS (ROUTE MARCHING).

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it be a fact that after six days' route marching undertaken by battalions in the Brigade of Guards, 220 men of the Grenadiers were reported sick and 12 men of the 2nd Coldstream Guards; what was the total marching out strength of the battalions referred to; and how many of the men in each were respectively long service men, short service men, or men enlisted for three years?

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir; the facts are not as stated. The 220 men of the Grenadiers were the total number who, during the six days in question, were for any cause seen by the medical officer. No record of such men was kept by the Coldstream Guards. The number who fell out was 22 in the Grenadiers and six in the Coldstreams, and the admissions to hospital were severally 17 and six. The marching-out strength was 1,460 Grenadiers and 980 Coldstreams. The three-years' men numbered 576, the seven-years' men 789, and there were 145 men of more than seven years' service, but these only refer to the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Grenadier Guards and to the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards. The similar returns for the 3rd Grenadiers and 1st Coldstreams have not been received.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER asked whether the statement was not a serious libel on the Brigade of Guards.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a matter of opinion.

CUSTOMS (PREVENTIVE OFFICERS AND BOATMEN).

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a petition referring to the conditions of employment of preventive officers and boatmen was received by the Board of Customs on or about 12th January last from the Customs' Waterguard Federation; and whether, if so, the subject-matter of the petition is under the consideration of the Board of Customs and the Treasury; and when an answer or decision may be expected in regard to the matter?

MR. HANBURY: The matter is under the consideration of the Board of Customs, who will shortly issue their decision in a circular Minute.

AGRICULTURAL RATING ACT, 1896.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he can now state approximately the total area and valuation, and the average rate per pound, of the land relieved by the Agricultural Rating Act, 1896?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The rateable value of the "agricultural land" in England and Wales at the date of the passing of the Act referred to was, according to the Returns furnished by the Assessment Committees, £24,563,000. I am unable to state what is the acreage of this land, or the average rate in the pound of the several rates levied in respect of it.

MR. KNOX asked whether the hon. Gentleman could not state the sum which the Government were going to pay on this area; then hon. Members could work out the rate per pound for themselves?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: That was not asked for, and I cannot give it.

*MR. SPEAKER said that the Question on the Paper had been answered.

MR. KNOX, as a point of order, said he had asked the hon. Member what was the poundage rate, and the hon. Member—

*MR. SPEAKER said there was no point of order.

MR. KNOX said that the answer of the hon. Member was really an evasion of the Question which had been put to him. [*Cries of* "Order!"] He asked for two things—the valuation and the poundage rate. The hon. Member gave the valuation, and could have also given the amount paid by the Government. It was clear that if he knew the amount paid by the Government he could have given the poundage rate. ["Order, order!"]

*MR. SPEAKER repeated that the Question was out of order; the Question on the Paper had been fully answered.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, St. Patrick (MR. FIELD), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any interest has been allowed on the money which is accruing to Ireland from the Agricultural Rating Act of last year; and whether he can state what rate will be given by the Government?

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Member is mistaken in supposing that the money is accruing in the Exchequer. The Local Taxation (Ireland) Estate Duty Act of last Session requires the Inland Revenue Board to pay over to the Irish Local Taxation Account periodically sums equal to 9-80ths of the sums payable to the English Local Taxation Account under the Agricultural Land Rating Act. The first of such payments, amounting to £74,870 13s. 2d. was made at the end of last March, as required by the Act, so no claim upon the Exchequer for interest can possibly arise.

MR. J. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant a Return showing the extent to which the local ratepayers in Ireland would be relieved if the Agricultural Rates Act of last year were extended to Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not prepared to give this Return. It could not be compiled with any degree of accuracy without much labour and expense. I doubt whether it could be compiled at all in the absence of regulations similar to those prepared in connection with the English Rating Bill.

POSTAL ORDERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what are the difficulties in the way which prevent the exchange of postal orders with Australia; whether the Australian Colonies at a Postal Conference, held at Hobart in March 1892, made a request to exchange postal orders; whether he is aware that the Postmasters General of the Australasian Colonies are unanimously of opinion that the risk of fraud would be no greater than now encountered in using postal orders in England; and whether he will consent to give the system a trial?

MR. HANBURY: The main objection to the establishment of an exchange of postal orders between this country and Australia is the danger of loss by forgery or fraud, which would be a serious risk in view of the length of time that must elapse before the discovery of the forgery or fraud. Although a resolution in favour of an exchange of postal orders with the United Kingdom was passed at the Postal Conference held at Hobart in 1892, no general proposal from the colonies has been received; and it is not known that the Australian Postmasters General are unanimously of opinion that the risk of fraud would be no greater than is now encountered in using postal orders in England. The Postmaster General has been giving careful consideration to the question, but no means of overcoming the objection to which I have referred has presented itself, and he regrets, therefore, that he is not prepared to give the system a trial.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the following inequalities in postal order commissions and charges; to forward 8s. the cost is 2d.; to forward 15s. the cost is 1½d.; to forward 17s. the cost is 2½d.; to forward 12s. 6d. the cost is 2d.; whether he will reconsider the decision of the officials not to issue intermediary postal orders from 6d. up to 20s., or whether he will take evidence from the public on the question; and whether he will so far meet the wishes of the people by issuing postal orders for 7s., 8s. and 9s.?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is, of course, aware of the scale of poundage upon postal orders. The inequalities are due to the fact that postal orders are issued for fixed sums, and that it requires two postal orders to transmit the intermediate sums. It was explained to the hon. Member on May 1 last year that the Government did not propose to incur the expense which would be involved in issuing postal orders rising by graduations of 6d. up to 20s., and they do not see their way to reconsider this decision. It does not appear that any useful object would be served by taking formal evidence from the public on this question, for the public are never slow to bring their wants to the notice of the Postmaster General. That the convenience of the public is met already appears to be clear from the fact that postal orders are very popular, and that their circulation reaches 67 millions a year. The Postmaster General does not propose to issue postal orders for 7s., 8s. and 9s.; any increase in the number of denominations would involve increased expenditure, which it would be necessary to meet by an increase in the rate of commission.

DEATH OF WORKHOUSE INMATE (CITY OF LONDON).

Mr. D. CRILLY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that at an inquest held yesterday at the Hackney Coroner's Court, on the body of an old woman named Margaret Ross, the evidence showed that the deceased had been an inmate of a City Union Workhouse; that her age was 77 years, and that she had been found dead on Thursday last beside the washing pail which she had been using in her work; also that the workhouse authorities had been in the habit of compelling this old woman to clean out a large ward containing 12 beds; and whether, if the evidence correctly states the facts, he will hold an inquiry as to the degree of responsibility which attaches to the officials of this workhouse for the death of Margaret Ross?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The Local Government Board have applied to the Coroner for a copy of the depositions at the inquest, and are making further inquiries in the case. When these are complete, the President will then determine what action, if any, on the part of the Local Government Board is necessary.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. BERNARD MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the adverse opinion expressed, irrespective of Party, to the Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, he intends to proceed further with that Bill; and, if not, whether, before introducing another Bill on the same subject, he will consult with the representatives of Ireland on the nature and form of such Bill?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It would, in my judgment, be altogether premature to assume that the Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill has been condemned by public opinion in Ireland.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he proposes to take the Second Readings of the Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill and of the Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not in a position at present to fix a date for the Second Reading of the Agriculture and Industries Bill. As regards the Poor Relief Bill, I propose to put it down for Monday, and trust it may be reached in time for discussion on that day.

CAPE GARRISON.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War how many officers, non-commissioned officers, men and horses were required to complete the three field batteries recently placed under orders for the Cape; from what source these details were drawn; and whether any of the field batteries on the roster for foreign service were called upon to supply drafts?

Mr. BRODRICK: No officers were required to complete these batteries for foreign service, but 189 men and 272 horses were supplied from 20 other batteries, all of which except two were on the lower establishment.

SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS (1st. BATT.).

Mr. F. B. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can inform the House how many men it was necessary to transfer from the 2nd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders (home coming from India) to the 1st Battalion of the same regiment, now stationed in Crete, in order that the latter battalion might be made up to proper strength for foreign service?

Mr. BRODRICK: The relief of the Seaforth Highlanders was carried out in complete accordance with the system of linked battalions. The one linked battalion relieved the other. The battalion coming home left 500 men for further foreign service; these the battalion going abroad took over, leaving at home about 250 men, mostly below the age for foreign service, to complete the home-coming battalion on its arrival. When, therefore, the 1st Battalion was ordered to Crete it was not necessary to transfer any men to it. The battalion was already at full strength of men in the best condition as to age and service.

CRETE.

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any, and, if so, what progress has been or is now being made in the removal of Turkish troops from Crete, and in the settlement of the form of that autonomy which the Six Powers have promised to offer to the Cretan people?

Mr. CURZON: The difficulties in the way of the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Crete, which I stated in my reply to the hon. Member for Northampton on the 27th inst., still hold good, and it has not, in consequence, been found possible to make any further progress in arranging for their removal. With regard to the settlement of the form of autonomy which is to be granted to the Cretans, I have nothing to add to the answer which I returned to the hon. Member for the South Molton Division on the 4th inst.—namely, that the Great Powers intend to carry the project into effect, but that the continued presence of the Greek troops and the consequent attitude of the Cretan Christians render progress in this respect very difficult.

Mr. BRYCE: Am I to understand from that answer that the form of the autonomy, the outlines that it will take, have not yet been settled?

Mr. CURZON: These matters have been under the consideration of the Powers, but I have given reasons why it has not been practicable hitherto to put a scheme of autonomy into practical operation in the island.

ROYAL PATRIOTIC COMMISSION.

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state what steps the Government intend to take to give effect to the recommendations of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the administration of the various funds controlled by the Royal Patriotic Commission?

Mr. BRODRICK: The Supplemental Commission recommended by the Select Committee, covering its more important recommendations, was issued on April 3, and is being acted upon by the Royal Commissioners.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (CAPTURE OF).

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private notice. It is whether he can state if there is any truth in the report in *The Times* of to-day that one of my influential constituents, the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield, is now a prisoner on board a Greek man-of-war—[*laughter*]—having been taken out of a Turkish coasting vessel when on his way to Salonika; whether any representation has been or will be made to the Greek Government at Athens, and a demand presented for his immediate release, together with a suitable apology—[*laughter*]—for this breach of international courtesy; or whether the hon. Gentleman is to be deemed contraband of war. [*Loud laughter.*]

Mr. JAMES CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): Before the right hon. Gentleman replies, I wish to ask him whether it is the case that the son of the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division is detained by the Greek Government, and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will use their great influence with the Greek Government with a view to securing the son's immediate liberation on the ground that a son cannot be held responsible for the acts of his father? [*Laughter.*]

Mr. CURZON: I am sure the House appreciates the solicitude which the hon. and gallant Admiral has so promptly displayed on behalf of his influential constituent. It is true that the hon. Member for Ecclesall has been captured—[*laughter*]—on board a boat off the coast of Greece. I am happy to be able to assure the House that he is in no personal danger. I cannot say without further consideration whether his capture ought to be regarded as a breach of international courtesy, but I apprehend that under no circumstances could the hon. Member be regarded as contraband of war. [*Laughter.*] He has been taken to Athens, where he is to be placed at the disposal of Her Majesty's Legation. [*Laughter.*] In reply to the hon. Member opposite, I have to say that there is every reason to hope that the son will receive the same clemency as is about to be bestowed on the father. [*Laughter.*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. J. MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I wish to ask whether the arrangement for taking the Foreign Office Vote to-morrow stands good; and what business will be taken on Monday?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I understand that the arrangement referred to by the right hon. Gentleman stands good. After the Foreign Office Vote, the intention was to take the Vote relating to the increase of the garrison in South Africa. On Monday it is intended to proceed with the Committee stage of the Necessitous School Boards Bill.

MR. J. MORLEY: I am afraid my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition will be away to-morrow, and it will be rather inconvenient if the South African Vote were taken in his absence. I should be glad to know whether that Vote could be postponed?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That will be postponed, then.

MR. T. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Home Secretary when the Second Reading of the Workmen's Compensation Bill would be taken, and whether it was likely that it would be taken next week?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have not had an opportunity of speaking to my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House since notice of the Question was given to me. All I can say is, that it will certainly not be taken on Monday, and I will take care that ample notice will be given.

METROPOLITAN POLICE COURTS AND THE JUBILEE.

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, in asking leave to introduce a Bill to enable Metropolitan Police Courts to be closed on special Bank Holidays, said that at present the only way of closing these Courts was by declaring the day a day of public thanksgiving under the provisions of the Bills of Exchange Act of 1882, the result of doing so would be that bills of exchange falling due on that day would become payable on the day preceding. But the day being also a bank holiday bills would be payable, under another provision of the same Act, on the succeeding day. That would give rise to great inconvenience.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Matthew White Ridley and Mr. Jesse Collings; presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 220.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS (BUDGET RESOLUTIONS).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

AGRICULTURAL RATING (IRELAND).

*MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) proposed to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words:—

> "In the opinion of this House, the Agricultural Rating Act of last year, not having been extended to Ireland, operates as a bounty to the English farmer as against the Irish farmer who is competing with him in the same markets, and that it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government in the financial proposals of the year to remove this inequality, and to grant to the Irish farmer the same measure of relief from rates which has been given to the English farmer."

He said he should make no apology for submitting the Motion on going into Committee of Ways and Means, though it was true that there was no precedent for some years past for such a Motion. He believed he could claim the unanimous assent of every single Member of the House of Commons representing an Irish constituency who was not a Member of the Government. On that ground he claimed somewhat more attention from the Government than had been habitually given to the demands of Irish Members. This was not a sectional demand. It was a national demand. It was not a request for generosity, but a demand for justice. ["Hear, hear!"] Irishmen were not prone to unanimity—["hear, hear!"]—but that fact, he thought, emphasised their unanimity on this occasion. It would, no doubt, be suggested that they were only unanimous now because they were all interested in this question, and because they had a demand to make for money on the British Exchequer. In one sense every Member of the House was interested in a question of this kind, and the vast majority, he frankly admitted, were interested in opposing the Motion; but he was sure that most English Members would regard it as an insult if they were told they were going to oppose the Motion because they were interested in opposing it. As far as he was himself concerned, he represented an urban constituency, and his constituents were not directly interested in the matter, and a whip signed by eight Members had been sent out, four Unionist and four Nationalist Members, only three of whom represented agricultural constituencies. The other five were not in any sense, nor were their constituents, interested in the question. They had signed the whip because they thought that Ireland had been badly treated in this matter, and had a right, as a nation, to demand redress. He would ask English Members, therefore, seeing that this demand came before them with such unanimity, not to vote down the Irish Members hastily or without consideration. His demand was that the Irish farmers should be given the same measure of relief as had been given to the English farmers by the Agricultural Rating Act. The object of that Act was, in the first place, to relieve the English farmers of half their rates; and, in the second place, to make up to the local authorities the loss so incurred. He knew that some of his hon. Friends above the Gangway held that the Bill was badly designed as a Measure of relief to the farmers, but he spoke of it as the Government designed it and defended it, and he believed that the description he had given of the Act was, in their view, correct. He turned now to the Report of the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression, on which the English Act was founded. In that Report, three grounds were given why the agricultural industry should be relieved: first, that there was an undue pressure of Imperial taxation on land; secondly, that there was a very heavy pressure of rates on the farmer, a heavier pressure than that on the householder; and, thirdly, that agriculture was in a depressed condition, due to low prices and foreign competition. He would ask whether any one of those three reasons was not as much applicable to Ireland as to Great Britain? ["Hear, hear!"] He ventured to say that every one of them applied to Ireland as much as to Great Britain. It was true the Commission did not so report, but they could not have so reported. They had not got a Report of a Royal Commission in their favour, but the Report of the Royal Commission for England applied with greater force to Ireland. As to the taxation of land, there was only one tax which did not apply to Ireland; all the other taxes were the same in the two countries. This taxation was now less than a million a year, and the valuation of land in England was over 170 millions, so that the land tax over England averaged less than 1½d. in the pound. As compared with the vast mass of Imperial taxation, this particular tax was very small. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that Irish farmers paid less income tax than English farmers, but Sir A. Milner had declared that since the reduction in Sir W. Harcourt's Budget, the income tax on farmers in England was not worth the cost of collection. There were, on the other hand, some taxes on land which pressed more heavily on Ireland than on England, and that was especially true as to the Death Duties. In Ireland it was the earth hunger of the tenant which was taxed. He had carefully worked this out, and he thought it would be admitted that Ireland paid a larger proportion than England. The last figures available as to the Death Duties showed that the increase under the Act of the hon. Member for Monmouthshire was in England 22 per cent., and in Ireland it was over 30 per cent. He was taking the total increase of the Death Duties.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): May I remark here, I noticed some time ago a statement by the hon. Member, and I think it is clear he is mistaken? As a matter of fact, the increases in the total Death Duties are practically the same in Great Britain and Ireland. I have had the figures taken out.

*MR. KNOX said the right hon. Gentleman was, then, perhaps right; but, at any rate, he would not be able to show that land in Ireland was taxed less than land in England. He did not agree that the land in either country was especially over-pressed by Imperial taxation; but that was a matter of opinion. All he did say was, that if there was undue pressure in one country, there must be the same undue pressure in the other. What he therefore had to find was the relative amount of the rates in the two countries. Now, in England, the agricultural rate was generally estimated at, on the average, 2s. 2d. [Hon. Members: "2s. 4d."] Well, taking the average at 2s. 4d., he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to find a single farmer in Ireland whose rates were not higher than the highest average in England. ["Hear, hear!"] The valuation in Ireland was higher than it was in England. The valuation in Ireland had not been revised for 40 years, which was almost an incredible thing in a civilised country. He believed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer 20 years ago, when Chief Secretary, brought in a Bill on the subject, and if he introduced his Bill now the Irish Members would not oppose it. He found the rents all fixed 27 per cent. below the valuation. Of course, it might be said that they were not fixing the rents fairly. ["Hear, hear!"] He on his side said the rents fixed were too high, and the Government would say the rents fixed were fair. Even proceeding on the basis that the valuation was about the same in the two countries, he found that, after a careful calculation, the average rural rate was about 3s. 3d. in the pound on agricultural land in Ireland; and for England the rate was 2s. 2d. in the pound. The Irish rate, therefore, was 50 per cent. higher. If the Irish valuation was a great deal too high—10 to 20 per cent. too high at least, as he maintained—the Irish rate must proportionately be a heavier burden on the land than the English rate. ["Hear, hear!"] Furthermore, in considering how any burden pressed on the people, they had to consider whether it was spread equally over the whole country. It would be generally admitted that if the rates of England had been the same in all parts of the country the burden would not have been complained of as much as it was; it was because in some parts the rates were higher than 2s. 2d. that they were so much complained of. But the inequalities of the rates in Ireland were infinitely greater than anything of which there was any experience in England. In the Debate last year the President of the Local Government Board said it took his breath away to find that in Essex there were 15 farms, the rates of which were 6s. 8d. in the pound. That was a prize case which had been discovered by the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers.*] The Irish poor rate was not assessed by the union as the English rate was, but the greater part of it was assessed for the electoral division, which had an area much smaller than the English parish, and the rate varied so much that in some electoral divisions it fell to 2d., and in others it rose to 5s. 11d. in the pound. The county cess went up in many cases to 10s. in the pound. [*Cheers.*] He was prepared to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that his official information did not tally with his information, but he found that in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Financial Relations Mr. Robinson, a Local Government Board Commissioner in Ireland, whose object, like that of all officials, was to minimise the sufferings under which the Irish laboured, said:—

> "In the poorer unions all round the western seaboard there is found considerable difficulty in levying rates, and, of course, the county cess is sometimes very oppressive. In the county of Kerry the county cess is extremely high. The average in the county of Kerry for the five years ended 1893 was in the barony of Clanmaurice 5s. 1d. in the pound and in Corkaguiny 6s. 4d."

That only related to county cess. When he quoted some of the Kerry figures last year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he had omitted the allowance for light railways, but he found that Mr. Robinson said, "The averages I have given do not include light railways." In addition to the county cess there was the poor rate, and that varied on the average of five years in various parts of Kerry from 3s. 3d. to 3s. 10d. It was much under the mark, therefore, to say that the rates paid over the whole of County Kerry had averaged for five or six years more than 10s. in the pound. Where, in the face of those facts, were the 15 farms in Essex? It was not only in Kerry that this state of things prevailed. Mr. Robinson showed that the limit of taxation had been reached in Connaught, and five union workhouses had actually been seized for debt. [*A laugh.*] The rates in the Belmullet union, where the workhouse was seized, were 13s. 5d. in the pound. Mr. Robinson said there was much more difficulty in collecting such rates from the landlords than from the tenants. [*Cheers.*] The reason of that was not that the landlords were dishonest, but because they were hard up. All classes, in fact, felt the pressure of local taxation. The Irish rates were not merely enormous, but they were increasing, and that was a matter in which Ireland's state compared in a most acute degree with England's. From the Report of the majority of the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression it appeared that, according to Reports of Mr. Goschen and Sir Henry Fowler, the rural rates in England were lower than they were before the repeal of the Corn Laws, and that that was chiefly due to the great diminution in the cost of the relief of the poor. In Ireland the circumstances were quite different. The total local taxation there was a mere trifle at the beginning of the century, but it rose 50 per cent. between 1866 and 1884, and it was still rising. He would be asked what was the cause of this pressure of local taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might point to speeches of Nationalists in which the increase was attributed to the unrepresentative character of local bodies, or to speeches of Unionists in which it was attributed to the wasteful expenditure of some Boards of Guardians. The causes of the increase were not to any considerable degree political at all—[" hear, hear! "]—but the increased expenditure was due almost entirely to essential economic conditions. Last year the First Lord of the Admiralty, in drawing a comparison between urban and rural rating, said that to a great extent the expenditure in the agricultural parts was a compulsory minimum expenditure, for which those who paid the rates were unable to see any single advantage to themselves. That was certainly true of Ireland. The greater part of the local taxation in Ireland really was a compulsory minimum expenditure which the people could not avoid, and for which they got little apparent benefit; it was expenditure on roads, the maintenance of pauper lunatics, and the relief of the poor. Could it be said there had been no agricultural depression in Ireland? The Chancellor of the Exchequer might say that the depression only affected wheat land, and, thanks to the repeal of the Corn Laws, Irish land was no longer suitable for wheat. But the President of the Local Government Board, speaking last year on the English Bill, said the suggestion that they ought to relieve arable land and not grass land was a most astounding one for Essex, which was the most depressed county in England, was over thousands of its acres nothing but grass land. Let the Government have it one way or the other. If grass land was not subject to depression, why did they relieve it in England? If it was subject to depression, why did they not also relieve it in Ireland? But it was not true to the extent some people supposed that Ireland was a country of pasture land. In the north-east corner of Ireland there was a larger proportion of tillage than in any other part of the United Kingdom, not excepting the Lothians. The people there were mostly Unionists, friends of the Government—their last friends in Ireland. Why had the Government carefully excepted them from the Measure of relief which they had extended to the other agricultural ratepayers of the United Kingdom? The same causes which had created agricultural depression in this country had applied to Ireland. Ireland had suffered from foreign competition in butter and bacon just as England had suffered from American and Russian competition in wheat. Ireland had suffered from the competition of bounty-fed flax growers in Belgium and France. It was a mere farce to say there was no agricultural depression in Ireland. They might be referred to the high price paid for tenant right. Nobody could regret more than he did the fact that Irish farmers were sometimes such fools as to pay absurd prices for the tenant right to patches of land. But that was not an economic price at all. The farms so bought were mostly small. Let anyone try to sell a farm of 40 or 50 acres in any county in Ulster, where tenant right was not a novelty. He would find that he would not be able to do so for a very long time. As a matter of fact, in Antrim and Down, tenant right brought considerably less than it did in the sixties, before it was protected by law at all. The fact was that the high prices paid for tenant right in Ireland were a proof, not of the value of the land, but of the poverty of the country in other industrial resources.

At any rate, it did not sound very well for a Government which last Session rejected the argument with regard to tenant right, when it was urged by Irish Unionist Members, to use it this year to defend their own pockets and their own Treasury. He suspected that the real reason why the Government treated Ireland so shabbily was that they found that to do justice and give Ireland the same measure of relief that was given to England would be very expensive. They were always willing to be generous when they could be generous on the cheap. The agricultural land of Ireland was estimated last year by the Chief Secretary to be just under nine millions sterling. A reduction of the rates by one half would amount to £733,000, and, of course, if the Government could put Ireland off with £150,000 for a board in Dublin it would be much cheaper for the Treasury. The argument could be used in favour of the system of the Government that it was cheap; but it was also nasty. What defence could there be for giving Ireland relief for her agricultural depression, not in proportion to the amount of her land, but in proportion to the amount of land in England. The excuse was that there was some solemn, sacred principle of 80, 11 and 9, which had an authority superior to most of the rules of arithmetic, and almost equal to that of the Binomial Theory—a thing which nobody could dispute, and which few could understand. It was invented not long ago by the ingenious mind of the First Lord of the Admiralty when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was making the Probate Duty grant in aid of rates. He found then, what the Treasury found now, that the rates in Ireland were very high, and that, if he made a grant to Ireland in proportion to the rates, he would have to give Ireland a very large sum; so he proposed to return the money to each of the three Kingdoms in proportion to the contribution of that Kingdom to Imperial taxation. Did anybody ever hear of a greater separatist? The right hon. Gentleman was the only man who had ever given effective legislative recognition to Irish nationality. He, however, noticed that the right hon. Gentleman only did this on those occasions on which he also gave a practical advantage to the British Treasury. He did not, for instance, as First Lord of the Admiralty, give Ireland nine-eightieths of the orders for shipbuilding which he gave to England.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): You should have them if you had the yards.

*MR. KNOX said they had a yard in Derry which was passed by the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was a member as fit to do that work; but they refused to give it a single order, and the industry died. If the right hon. Gentleman made a firm offer to give Ireland 9 per cent. of the work they would have the yard there to-morrow. The Member for East Belfast could get along without the orders of the Government. He could build better ships than the Admiralty could obtain in the South of England if they tried till doomsday. The Government only applied the doctrine of 9-80ths where it suited the Treasury. They had a remarkable incident of that in the case of the grant for free Education. They decided to apply the principle of 9-80ths so long as it suited the Treasury, but changed it so soon as the balance went the other way. The First Lord of the Admiralty when, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he gave Free Education to England said he would give Ireland not 10s. per child, but 9-80ths of what England got. That principle had since been described by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer as a ridiculous principle. They might settle it between them. The Treasury at first thought they would be effecting a great saving by giving Ireland nine-eightieths. But owing to the decrease in the population of Ireland and the increase in the population of England, the time came when nine-eightieths would give Ireland more than 10s. per head, and thereupon the Treasury based the grant on 10s. per head.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The only question before us is the alleged inequality in the treatment of Ireland in the matter of agricultural rating. It seems to me that the hon. Member is now arguing a much wider question.

*MR. KNOX said he would try to keep within the ruling of the Speaker. He would only say that as soon as the Treasury found that nine-eightieths did not suit them they changed the basis of the grant, and it was now based on 10s. per head.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): It was based ever since the commencement of the Act on 10s. per head; precisely the same demand that was made by Mr. Sexton.

*MR. KNOX said that Mr. Sexton had made a demand for 10s. a head but it was refused because it was thought at the time it would give Ireland more than nine-eightieths. Years went on and the Treasury found that 10s. a head would be cheaper, and thereupon they based the grant on that calculation. The second argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year was that there was no desire in Ireland for a reduction of rates. The right hon. Gentleman now knew that there was a desire in Ireland for the reduction of rates. In fact they had just as great a desire in Ireland for a reduction of rates as any Englishman could have. The right hon. Gentleman had arrived at the idea that there was no desire for a reduction of rates in Ireland because some small equivalent grants that went to Ireland had not been applied to the relief of rates. The reason of that was that the grants were so small that they would not have made any appreciable effect on the rates in Ireland. But in the case of the large sum now at stake there was no purpose for which they would sooner have it applied in Ireland than for the reduction of rates. The third argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year was that half the rates in Ireland were paid by the landlords, and that that system would prevent the application of the Agricultural Rating Act to Ireland. But the Treasury got over that difficulty in the case of Scotland. It was only when they would have to spend a little more money in Ireland that this difficulty as between landlords and tenants occurred to their ingenious minds. He was sure the Treasury would be glad to see them fighting over the question whether the money should go to the landlords or the tenants while they kept the money in their own pockets. For his own part he would be glad to see some of this money given to the landlords, and he was sure that many hon. Members from Ireland who sat opposite would be glad to see some of it go to the tenants, because they knew it would be for the good of the landlords if the tenants were prosperous, for the better off the tenants were, the better the rents would be paid. He would not allude to the Report of the Financial Relation Commission, for the injustice of which he now complained had been created since that Commission reported. At the same time the Report of that Commission increased the force of the Irish demand for equal treatment with England. Ireland was overtaxed. They could not deny, however they might attempt to explain it, that Ireland paid more in proportion to its taxable capacity than England, and in the light of that fact how mean their action appeared. They gave to the people on whom taxation pressed least heavily, but they denied to the people on whom taxation pressed most heavily, and they had the additional gratification of feeling that the richest were their constituents, and the poorest were the constituents of Members from Ireland. He thought the only satisfactory relief from the overpressure of taxation was the reduction of taxation. He should be prepared to say that it would be an advantage to Ireland if she had a separate Custom House and separate taxes, but it was not necessary to do so for the present purpose. He admitted what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said in his Budget speech, that a grant in aid of rates was equivalent to a reduction of taxation. Therefore the Treasury, by giving Ireland this money in relief of their rates, would *pro tanto* relieve them from the burden of taxation. Of course it would not be a full equivalent. £500,000 a year was not an equivalent for three millions; but so far as it went it would be to the good, and he thought the people of Ireland would be glad to take the sum on account for the money which they were afterwards to receive. During the debate on the financial relations question, a good deal had been said as to the meaning of the words "exemptions and abatements" in the Act of Union. The clause in the Act of Union said the taxation in England and in Ireland was to be equal, subject to such exemptions and abatements in Ireland as circumstances might appear from time to time to demand. He had gone with care into the history of the words. They were not much discussed on the occasion of the Union between Ireland

and Great Britain; but they were fully discussed on the occasion of the Union between England and Scotland. As a matter of fact, the Irish did not think the words were of any great importance. Those exemptions and abatements were only to come into practice when the Exchequers of the two countries were united, and as the Irish people did not think it probable that the Exchequers would be united for a long period, they had not given much attention to the meaning of the words. For the origin of the words they should, therefore, go to the history of the Union of England and Scotland. The English Commissioners demanded that the subjects of both nations should be subjected to the same burdens, excises, and taxes. To this the Scotch Commissioners demurred, and they obtained some concessions. In the first place they obtained a provision that the Land Tax of Scotland should be limited to £45,000. That was the abatement. In the second place, after agreeing to certain equal duties, they obtained exemption from certain burdens and excises within Scotland for a competent time, to be adjusted in the course of its trade for certain articles. That was the exemption. They further agreed that if the exemption should be found impossible, owing to the prejudice to English trade and manufactures, Scotland should, in the alternative, receive as an equivalent an annual compensation for the inequality of taxation. He contended that although equal treatment in the matter of agricultural rates would not be, in the literal sense, exemption or abatement, it might be accepted *pro tanto* as an equivalent. They made an appeal to the spirit rather than to the words of the Act of Union; but nevertheless, if the Government gave them what they asked for they would be to some extent carrying out the express provision of the Act of Union as to exemptions and abatements. There were some people who did not like to regard Ireland as a separate entity, and to those he would point out that the burden of which they complained affected not merely the country but the individual farmer in Ireland. Let them take the peasant in Donegal, who was employed chiefly in raising store cattle, which he sold in Scotland or England in competition with English and Scotch farmers, who also raised store cattle. The rates in Donegal averaged 5s. 6d. in the pound —perhaps a little more. If the Donegal farmer had the advantage of living in England he would get from the State 2s. 9d. in the pound to help him in the work of producing store cattle. The English farmers with whom he was competing got half their rates paid, but he did not. This Donegal peasant who competed with the English and Scotch farmers was farther from the markets, and lived in a worse climate than they did, and yet the Government added to his difficulties by making a grant of half the rates to the English farmer and refusing to give any relief to the Donegal peasant. He had to be content with what little satisfaction he could derive from knowing that a Board was to be set up in Dublin. [*Ironical Irish cheers.*] Was it not an inequality without parallel in the civilised world that they should give to one class of producer in one part of the country out of the joint Exchequer a grant to encourage him in his industry while refusing to give the same boon to another producer who paid the same taxes? Was there a parallel in Turkey itself to that injustice. [*Laughter, and Irish cheers.*] After making careful inquiries, he had arrived at the conclusion that the farmer in Donegal could not produce each year more than one head of cattle fit for the market to a valuation of £5. He was handicapped by not getting a relief which the English farmer got to the extent of 13s. 9d. on every store beast. Could it be said that the Government were meting out equal treatment to all parts of the United Kingdom? They refused to make any distinction in matters of taxation. Why were they not entitled to the same relief in Ireland as was given to English farmers and landlords? He ventured to say that they might search the records of history in vain to find any meaner action than this. The Government did not put off the relief of the English farmer until the Commission on the Incidence of Rates in Great Britain had reported. Why, then, should they put off the relief of the Irish farmer until the new Commission on the Financial Relations had reported? He could only understand one reason for this injustice, namely, that it suited the pockets of the Government; but if it suited their consciences as well as it suited their pockets, he would not give much for their consciences. [*Ironical Irish cheers.*] He begged to move the Motion.

*Mr. HORACE PLUNKETT (Dublin Co., S.) said that, in his opinion, the speech of the hon. and learned Member had not been one bit too long. He particularly desired to endorse the view that English Members should pay due regard to the absolute unity among Irish representatives upon this occasion. He did not fear that English Members would attribute that unity to mere greed for money from the British Exchequer. So bitter, unfortunately, had been the antagonism between the Irish representatives on the two sides of the House that they would be hardly likely to come together on a purely fiscal matter unless they had the honest conviction that those on the other side were right in their contention. This was the second time that this question had been raised, and, as on the former occasion, the Government now seemed to take refuge in a doubt as to whether their Measure of last year was for the relief of agriculture or for the reform of local taxation. The words of the Queen's Speech of last year absolutely decided the matter. That Speech read:—

> "I regret to say that the condition of agriculture is disastrous beyond any recent experience. Measures will be laid before you, of which the object will be to mitigate the distress under which the classes labour who are engaged in that industry."

He would point out that in these words there was no question of the relief of countries; there was to be relief of certain classes who were suffering from an economic crisis in a specified industry. If the Government honestly desired the Rating Act of last year to apply to Ireland they could adjust every difference there might be between the conditions of the two islands. It was not necessary to fall back upon the proportions of 80, 11, and 9. The result of that proportion was that Ireland received the one-tenth of her rates as against one-half paid in England. The hon. Member for Derry had clearly made out his case, that this was giving a bonus to English farmers, but he had omitted to say that there was a specific clause in the Act of Union which absolutely prohibited any bonuses being given in any of the three countries which would act disadvantageously as against the others He would not now refer to the attitude of the Government with regard to the financial relations, as he was anxious that the present question should be considered on its merits, but he would like to say a word with regard to the proposed allocation of whatever money was coming to them through the Agriculture and Industries Bill. In the Queen's Speech last year it was admitted that the interests of agriculture in Ireland were of paramount importance, and they were told that a Bill would be introduced in order to assist that industry; but would it be believed that the Government had diverted the money provided in accordance with the promise given in the Queen's Speech of last year, so that it should this year march round again like a stage army, and appear as a new gift to Irish industries. He should be glad to see a sum given to Ireland equivalent to that given to England and Scotland for educational facilities. He appealed to English Members to take the matter before the House seriously to heart. The relations between England and Ireland were very much concerned in the decision which might be come to that night. He had been at variance with the majority of the representatives of Ireland on the nature of those relations, and during the short time that he had been connected with public affairs in Ireland he had done his best to bring about a better state of feeling between the two countries. He had not, he admitted, been successful, and, in fact, it was borne in upon him every day that there seemed to be a hopeless incapacity on the part of Englishmen—[*Nationalist cheers*]—to understand Ireland or the Irish question, or for Irishmen to understand Englishmen. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He had done his utmost to assure his own countrymen that if there was one quality that Englishmen might boast of it was a desire to do justice. [*Nationalist laughter.*] It was not necessary for hon. Members opposite to laugh. He had already admitted that they disagreed on that point, and he was afraid that they would continue to do so. At the same time he was extremely anxious that the present Government should have an opportunity of backing up their supporters in Ireland, who were assiduously endeavouring to persuade their fellow-countrymen that not only were Englishmen endeavouring to do justice to Ireland, but intended to do it. A Nationalist friend told him the other day that they could never get justice from England unless they went with a landlord's head in one hand and a cow's tail in the other.—[*Nationalist cheers and laughter*]—but he still held that after all the Irish race was not incapable of coming to a better understanding with England, and he sincerely hoped that English Members of all Parties would assist them in enabling the English Government, and their supporters in Ireland to prove the justice of the position he had taken up. [*Cheers.*]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Sir, there is one sentence in the Motion of the hon. Member for Derry to which I should like to call attention in passing, and that is the statement that the Agricultural Rating Act for England has given a benefit to the English farmer. We have not been accustomed to hear that language from the opposite side of the House; on the contrary, we have had definite statements on the other side from right hon. Gentlemen and many other speakers who addressed us last year—I am not quite sure I could not quote some expressions from the hon. Member for Derry himself, or at any rate from one of his leaders—[*Ministerial laughter*]—to the effect that the Act would not benefit the English farmer. The hon. Member now holds out that Act as a boon to the English farmer, and has founded on that statement a remarkable argument that if the same Act is not applied to Ireland the result will be that a bounty will be given to the English farmer as against the Irish farmer in the markets in which they compete. Well, I do not think I can go quite as far as the hon. Member in his view of the Act of last year. In my belief—and I have always said so—it will be a benefit to the English farmer certainly at first, probably for the whole time of its operation; but when fresh tenancies and created, especially if there should be a change in the present state of the market as between landlord and tenant in favour of the landlord, then, no doubt—I think it is admitted—the owner of the land will have an advantage. But at present I admit the hon. Member is justified in claiming that Act as a benefit to the English farmer. Is it a bounty? That argument would lead us to this, that we should never do anything for the advantage of any class of persons in England, Scotland, or Ireland, without doing precisely the same thing—quite apart from the fact whether the circumstances were different or not—for the same class of persons over the whole of the United Kingdom. Our contention is, and in that I am afraid I must differ from the hon. Member, that in this matter the circumstances of Ireland are different from those of England, and to my mind it would really be as absurd to hold out the Agricultural Rating Act of last year as a bounty to English as against Irish farmers as to say, for example, that the freedom of Irish farmers from rates for education or police and from land tax where a man occupies his own land, and matters of that kind, are a bounty to the Irish as against the English farmer. ["Hear, hear!"] You might almost go on at that rate to argue that to give the advantages which have been undoubtedly given by our whole code of Irish land legislation to the occupier of land in Ireland as compared with the occupier of land in the rest of the United Kingdom is a bounty to Irish farmers. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not think it necessary to dwell upon that part of the hon. Member's argument. He has discussed at great length the question he has brought before the House, though not at too great length, for I admit the ability of his speech. I wish he had not marred it by imputing to me—not personally, but to the Government—

*MR. KNOX: The system.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: And to the office I have the honour to hold, mean and other discreditable motives which I am sure do not enter into the matter in the least. If I could have seen last year that it was a fair thing, having regard to the past and having regard to the present, to propose for Ireland precisely the same kind of relief in agricultural rating as was proposed for England, I certainly should have done it irrespectively of the cost. ["Hear, hear!"] But what happened? The hon. Member himself has raised this matter before. When the Agricultural Rating Act was passing through this House, the hon. Member moved an

Instruction to the Committee asking that the Act might be extended to Ireland. That was debated at considerable length. Several hon. Members from Ireland spoke in the Debate, and, after hearing the arguments, the House rejected the proposal by a very large majority. Why? Because, in the opinion of the great majority of the House, the hon. Member had entirely failed to prove that the circumstances were identical to which he wished to apply identical remedies. I think he has equally failed to-night. Let the House consider what has been the history of this question of local taxation. It has been a question which, since the day I entered Parliament, has been year after year brought before this House by representatives of agricultural constituencies in England. There was a very strong feeling in the English agricultural constituencies that the agricultural ratepayers, whether owners or occupiers, were unfairly assessed to local taxation as compared with their real ability to pay, and that the immunity of personal property was a great grievance. That matter was brought before the House year after year, and steps were taken, one after the other, to meet the demands that were made. In the meantime, the amount of personal wealth in this country largely increased, and the value of agricultural land largely diminished, and when the late Government assumed office the depression of agriculture in Great Britain was such, that they appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into that particular matter. The reference to that Royal Commission was not extended to Ireland. Why was it not extended to Ireland? Because, of course, in the opinion of the late Government agricultural depression did not exist in Ireland—[*Irish laughter*]—in the sense that it existed in England. Of course, if they had felt that the contrary was the case, they would have included Ireland in the reference. They did not; that is the simple fact. The Commission was appointed and reported, as hon. Members will recollect, in favour of relief to the occupiers of agricultural land in Great Britain from rates to an extent larger than was granted to them by the Agricultural Rating Act of last year; and Parliament acted upon that recommendation, on the ground that the occupiers of agricultural land, on account of the depressed condition of agriculture, ought to be relieved from the incidence of rating before any other ratepayer; and the case of other ratepayers was remitted for inquiry to the Royal Commission. Now what had been the previous practice in Parliament in regard to cases where relief had been given to English ratepayers? My right hon. Friend, as the hon. Member observed, introduced that practice in the year 1888. It was held by Parliament, and repeatedly acted upon, that when a certain proportion of Imperial revenue was intercepted from the common purposes of the United Kingdom and handed over to England, for the relief of local ratepayers, that an equivalent grant should be made to Scotland and to Ireland in the proportion of 80, 11, and 9, which should be expended for local purposes in those parts of the United Kingdom. The hon. Member now seems rather to group the cases of England and Scotland together, as if Ireland had equally a grievance against both of them in this matter. What happened in the case of Scotland? An equivalent grant in the old proportion of eleven-hundredths was given to Scotland under the Act which was passed last year for Scotland, and in the same way a grant of nine-hundredths was given to Ireland for Irish purposes. That was precisely the course that had been followed in previous years. Is that, assuming the practice of equivalent grants to be a fair one, an unfair course? I can show that the proportion of nine-hundredths, at any rate, is favourable to Ireland. Of course, the calculation was based upon the respective contributions of the three parts of the United Kingdom to the joint revenue. The proportion of the total revenue of the United Kingdom contributed by Ireland in the years 1895-96 was only 7·34 per cent., and therefore, on that basis, Ireland was a considerable gainer; and, again, if you were to take the sources of revenue which were diverted from Imperial to local purposes you would find that Ireland was even a greater gainer in that way. The sources of revenue were three—namely, a part of the probate or estate duty, on personalty, and a surtax, upon spirits and beer. In the year 1895-96, whereas Ireland only contributed 4·8 per cent. of the total probate duty on personalty, she received 9 per cent.—nearly double. She contributed 6·47 per cent. of the surtax upon beer, and received 9 per cent. She contributed 12·5 of the surtax upon spirits, and received 9 per cent., making a total receipt in 1895-96 for local purposes for Ireland of no less than £89,000 more than her contribution to these sources of revenue. I do not wish to attach too much importance to this, because the whole 9 per cent. was based on the total revenue of the country, of which, as I have shown, Ireland contributed only 7·34 per cent. But the gist of the hon. Member's Motion is this—he objects to equivalent grants altogether; he is not considering whether they are fair or not. He says that we ought not to have dealt with this matter by equivalent grants, but that we should have given to Irish farmers precisely the same form of relief we gave to English agricultural ratepayers. ["Hear, hear!"] Let me say on that, in the first place, that I demur to his view that there have been the same complaints with regard to local taxation in Ireland on agricultural land as there have been in England. The whole history of our Parliamentary Debates upon that subject, I believe, will show the contrary. The hon. Member himself admitted that whereas certain grants had been given to Ireland from the Imperial revenue for local purposes, some of those grants had, with the consent of the Irish Members, not been devoted to the relief of ratepayers, but had been devoted to other purposes altogether.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): We were never consulted.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: You were here.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: We protested, and you would not listen to us.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: That is not my recollection. My recollection is that the purposes to which these grants were devoted were assented to by the Irish Members.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: We continually kicked against the £10,000 for horse-breeding.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: At any rate, the fact is this—that in the year 1887, when a grant was made to the local authorities in Great Britain for the maintenance of highways in relief of ratepayers, a corresponding grant to Ireland was devoted to certain local industries and certain local public works. In 1888 the grant of £40,000 was not devoted to the relief of ratepayers, but was used, in the first place, as a reserve to meet the requirements of the Land Purchase Acts, and now is to go to the building of labourers' cottages. In 1890 the Irish share of the surtax on the beer and spirit duties was given directly for the purposes of elementary and intermediate education. That, at any rate, I think, shows that the claims of Irish ratepayers have not been in past years pressed upon Parliament in the same way as the claims of English ratepayers. Why is that? I cannot answer that question, though I confess it occurs to me that it may have been the case in the past that the rates of Ireland were not so high as the rates in England, or, possibly, the attention of Irish Members was directed to other matters. I merely refer to a fact. But now, it is said, there is another state of things, and in the view of the hon. Member, the most necessary purpose to which any grant from the Imperial funds can be devoted in Ireland is the relief of the agricultural ratepayer. I do not know whether that view is assented to or not by hon. Members from Ireland generally. If that be so, then, of course, that view will be very carefully considered by the Irish Government. I do not know what course the Irish Government may propose to take with regard to the £150,000 which has been allocated for Irish purposes.

*Mr. KNOX: The Irish Government will say that that is a Treasury matter.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: No, that is not a Treasury matter. The system of equivalent grants is a Treasury matter, but the mode in which the amount is to be dealt with is not a Treasury matter at all. It is a matter in which I imagine the Irish Government would be practically free from Treasury control and would desire to consider the wishes of the representatives for Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] But that, of course, is not what the hon. Member wants. What he wants is a good deal more. ["Hear,

hear!"] He wants that £150,000 to be largely increased—[*Nationalist cheers*]—and that is the whole object of his Motion. Why should it be increased? The hon. Member spoke of the pressure of rates in Ireland. He made light of the English land tax, which is a very severe burden in many of the poorest agricultural parts of England, but with which I will not deal, as it does not fall upon the occupier, but upon the owner. But he went on to compare the valuation of Ireland with the valuation of England, and he said that the valuation of property for the purposes of rating was too high in Ireland and too low in England. I am quite confident of this—that when I had a special connection with the Irish Government, which now is some years ago, the valuation of property in Ireland was considerably below the real value.

*MR. KNOX: That was in 1875.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: And in 1886. Of course, things may have changed. It may be that in some parts, perhaps in many parts, of Ireland, Griffith's valuation, as it is called, is at present higher than the value as fixed by the Land Commissioners. ["Hear, hear!"] But I do not think that if there be any real desire on the part of hon. Members for Ireland that the valuation of that country should be revised, they will find Her Majesty's Government at all backward in associating themselves with that request. [*Cheers.*]

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): It would cost a quarter of a million to do it.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, but it might be worth a quarter of a million to have a revision of the valuation. [*Cheers.*] At any rate, I am perfectly prepared to take the matter into consideration with a real desire to carry something out, if we had any understanding that it would be favourably received by the Members for Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] It can be, so far as I can see, no object to anybody, and certainly no object to the Treasury, that the taxes and rates of Ireland should be levied upon an unfair valuation. ["Hear, hear!"] But with regard to the valuation in England, it is not my experience, and I have some little experience in that matter, that the valuation for rating purposes in agricultural districts is at present too low. ["Hear, hear!"] I have known many cases where it is too high—[*cheers*]—and where it has been found impossible to induce the assessment committees to take what I may call a fair view of the real value of agricultural property in its present depreciated condition. I do not think, therefore, that on that basis the hon. Member can make out any case for Ireland. But he has compared the rate in the pound which is paid by ratepayers in Ireland and in England, and he has put on one side the 2s. 4d. in the pound which was calculated as the average rate on agricultural land to which the Agricultural Rating Act applied, and compared that with the 3s. 3d. in the pound which he has calculated as the average amount of rates paid by ratepayers in Ireland. I would submit that that comparison is entirely fallacious.

*MR. KNOX: I did not say as the total amount. The average would be very much larger. I have taken the average paid by agricultural ratepayers.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I do not think the hon. Member has any real basis for arriving at that conclusion. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know how he has separated the portion of the poor rate which is paid by the landlord from the portion which is paid by the occupier, because his Motion only refers to that portion of the poor rate which in Ireland is paid by the occupier? How has he separated, with regard to the grand jury cess, the rate in the pound on purely agricultural lands from the rate in the pound on buildings, on houses in towns, to which the grand jury cess, of course, applies, and on other property which is not agricultural land at all.

*MR. KNOX: The cess only applies in a very partial degree to the towns.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I think the grand jury cess applies very largely to the towns. ["Hear, hear!"] That is my recollection. I have been quite unable myself to arrive at any real estimate of the average rate in the pound on agricultural land in Ireland which could fairly be compared with the 2s. 4d., which was the average estimated rate on agricultural land in England. I do not think the House can conclude anything from the 3s. 3d. in the pound or the figures of 1s. 5½d. for the average poor rate and 2s. 1d. for the average grand jury rate to which the hon. Member has referred. Then, again, he has referred to the specially high rates, in certain baronies or electoral divisions in the poorest parts of Ireland, and he asserted that those high rates were in no case due to the rates levied under the Light Railways Act or other corresponding legislation. I think the hon. Member is mistaken.

*MR. KNOX: I am sorry to again interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but I did not say so. I said that the particular figures, which I gave on the authority of Mr. Robinson, who is a Local Government Board official in Ireland, did not include the light railway rates as Mr. Robinson himself said. I did not make the general statement.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am quite sure, having looked through the return obtained by the hon. Member for East Mayo a year or two ago, that I could put my finger on baronies or electoral divisions in Ireland where the rates are heaviest, the greater part of which would be due to the cost of light railways or something of that kind. The hon. Member spoke of the Belmullet Union and other unions in the West. I am afraid it would be found that the excessive rates in those unions are directly due to mismanagement which would not be tolerated on this side of the Channel—[*cheers and Nationalist cries of* "No!"]—and I do not think we can fairly be expected to give relief in cases of that kind. [*Cheers, and an* IRISH MEMBER: "That is not so."] I contend, as I have already said, that the circumstances of Ireland with regard to agricultural depression cannot be compared with those of England. I do not say for a moment that there have not been bad seasons in Ireland, when the occupiers have suffered. I do not say for a moment that there have not been fluctuations in the prices of stock, which, when low, they have also suffered from. But what has been the real cause of what we call agricultural depression in England—that agricultural depression into which the late Government found it necessary to institute a special inquiry? Why, unquestionably, the low price of wheat, and England is a wheat-growing country, and Ireland is not. ["Hear, hear!"] That is really at the bottom of the whole matter. I know, with regard to farms in several parts of England, it is no easy matter when a farm is vacant to obtain a new tenant. At any rate, it is not an easy matter to obtain a tenant who is prepared to pay, not a high tenant-right, but the ordinary payments for acts of husbandry and compensation for unexhausted improvements which, under any proper system of agriculture, must be paid by an incoming tenant to the outgoing tenant. What is the cause of the high price of tenant-right in Ireland I must leave to those better acquainted with Ireland than myself to determine; but, at any rate, the occupation of a farm in that country must be worth something if sensible people like Irishmen are willing to pay great prices for those rights. [*Laughter and cheers.*] Could you find anybody to do it in England? I do not believe you could. ["Hear, hear!"] In England, again, we settle the rents by agreement between landlord and tenant in what is ordinarily known as the bargaining of the market, and the result is, as we have seen, that rents practically everywhere, have gone down, and in many parts have gone down enormously. ["Hear, hear!"] In Ireland you have to maintain a special system of land legislation in order to protect the tenant against the bargaining of the market and to prevent the landlord getting from him a higher rent than Parliament has considered he ought in fairness to pay. The circumstances of the two countries in this matter are as different as could by any possibility be conceived—[*cheers*]—and, that being so, I fail to understand how the hon. Member can with fairness argue that identical remedies ought to be applied to them. ["Hear, hear!"] If it be the case that the incidence of local taxation on the ratepayers generally, or on the agricultural ratepayers specially, in Ireland has become a greater grievance than it was in the years to which I have alluded, there is an opening of which Irishmen can avail themselves. There is a Royal Commission now sitting—[*ironical laughter*]—to inquire into the incidence of local taxation. That inquiry extends to

Ireland. Ireland is ably represented on that Commission, and if they make any recommendations with regard to local taxation in Ireland, those recommendations will come with great weight to Her Majesty's Government and to Parliament. But at present what I feel is this—

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Cannot you appoint another to upset it?

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: We have appointed that Commission ourselves, and the remark of the hon. Member is hardly to the point. ["Hear, hear!"] It is not asked that we should really give identical treatment to Ireland in this case. My right hon. Friend the Member for County Dublin referred to the Bill of the Chief Secretary for establishing a Board of Agriculture and handing over to that Board the sum of £150,000 a year which was allocated to Ireland as an equivalent grant by the Act of last Session. My hon. Friend desires, I believe, that much larger funds should be handed over to the Board of Agriculture. His desire is that Ireland should have identical treatment with regard to the relief of farmers from agricultural rating, but should not have identical treatment with regard to the funds to be expended in Ireland by the Board of Agriculture. The Imperial Treasury is to pay with both hands.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Give us back our own money. [*Laughter.*]

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Why is this request made? It is made, as the hon. Member's speech shows, because of the report of the majority of the Financial Relations Commission. He believes, as the majority of the Commission assert, that a large debt is due from Great Britain to Ireland in order to remedy overtaxation. He believes, contrary to all the Irish Members of that Commission, that it would be a set-off to overtaxation if additional grants were made in this way to Ireland. That is a view which he is perfectly entitled to hold, but we have not been able to admit the correctness of that view. We have not been able to accept the finding of the majority of the Royal Commission as to the overtaxation of Ireland. We have not been able to admit that Great Britain owes a debt in this matter to Ireland. On the contrary we propose that the subject should be further inquired into, and we do not stand in this matter on the same ground as hon. Members opposite. We are asked not merely to give to Irish agricultural ratepayers the same treatment as is given to English agricultural ratepayers in other circumstances, but also to give to Ireland grants for other purposes, of a much larger amount, which would never have been required or asked for in England. We are unable to adopt that course. My contention is that this Motion which has been moved as an Amendment to the Budget, is contrary to the past practice of Parliament in dealing with these matters of local taxation as between the three countries. It is not based on any proved necessity, but is based on the view that there is a great debt due by Great Britain to Ireland—a view which has not been accepted by the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. E. CARSON (Dublin University) said that when the Motion with reference to the Financial Relations Commission was before the House he supported the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] He did so for the same reason as he intended to oppose them that evening. On that occasion it was argued that Ireland was a separate entity—that Ireland was entitled to separate financial treatment. As a Unionist, he could not, and would not, accept that view. He was well aware that there had been many occasions during recent years upon which the House had treated Ireland as a separate entity. It was to that he attributed the isolated position which Irish Unionists held in Ireland, because if they looked back at the past history of this Parliament in relation to Ireland they found that it was whenever Ireland was so treated Irish Unionists were deserted by English Members who otherwise sympathised with them. It was also because they had been so treated that many of the fundamental principles of the Act of Union had been set at naught. By that treatment they had been robbed of their Church, and now day by day they were robbing their landlords of their property. So far as he was concerned, he would be no party to the Separatist doctrines which had been laid down with such force by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [*Opposition cheers.*] Nor would he any longer be prepared to submit to being treated at one moment as a member of this great country, and at another moment as a member of something entirely different. All they asked in this case was that they should be treated exactly as if they were a part of this country—that the County Kerry should receive exactly the same treatment as Essex or Norfolk. He had listened with great disappointment to the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had not refuted a single argument put forward by the Mover of the Resolution. Was it disputed that there were baronies in Kerry which paid 10s. in the pound on the valuation of the agricultural rating and something like 13s. in Mayo? The poorer the district the higher the rates, and the proofs adduced by the hon. and learned Member had not been challenged. The answer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was twofold; he said that the circumstances of Ireland and England were different. Their only difference was in the amount of the aggravated distress existing in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] Then it was said that there was not the same amount of agricultural distress in Ireland as in England; but if this was so, what did the Government intend to do in relation to their own Sub-Commissioners, who were daily cutting down rents 60 to 70 per cent. under Acts to which the Government were a party? It was further said, "Look at the large sums being paid for tenant right in Ireland." What was the reason? The reason was because land in Ireland was the sole employment of the people. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The second argument employed was their old friend the equivalent grant. The meaning of this was that they were not to consider the circumstances or the wants of the country, but the amount of contribution to certain matters of Imperial revenue. If that argument held good—if they were still a United Kingdom, which he was beginning to doubt—[*Opposition cheers*]—what became of the statement constantly being made as to the great advantages to the poorer country forming a portion of the wealthier? [*Nationalist cheers.*] The argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a separatist tendency. The question was really a simple one. Local taxation on agricultural land was higher in Ireland than in England; but the grievance was not to be met. The argument had been used that in course of time the grant under the Agricultural Rating Act of last year might find its way into the pockets of the English landlords. There would, however, be no chance of anything of that kind occurring in Ireland, because there the rents were fixed by the Land Courts, which would intervene to prevent the money from going into the landlords' pockets. Both sides in that House were always professing to be the friends of Ireland, but when it came to a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, each side endeavoured to take as much as it could from that country. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The policy of both sides for relieving the occupiers of land in Ireland was simply to take another slice off the interest of the landlords. That was a policy which cost the British Exchequer nothing. He should certainly support this Resolution. The refusal of the Government to entertain the claim advanced unanimously by the representatives of Irish constituencies would cause grave disappointment in Ireland. He was anxious to hear what the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Irishmen who had the honour of being associated with him as Members of the Government had to say on this subject. ["Hear, hear!"] He had watched the flow of public opinion in Ireland, and everywhere, even in newspapers which were avowedly supporters of the Government, the same language of disapprobation was used with regard to their conduct in not extending to Ireland the benefits of the English Rating Act. Since this Government had come into power, the position of Unionism in Ireland had not improved —[*Nationalist cheers*]—and the attitude of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would render that position worse. There was only one way to maintain the union between the two countries, and that was by doing absolute justice to Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) observed that the reductions of rent in Ireland, which his right hon. and learned Friend had always stoutly opposed, ought to be viewed by him as bounties to the Irish farmers as against the English farmers. The right hon. and learned Gentleman contended that Kerry, for example, ought to be treated in precisely the same way as Essex was.

But was Kerry prepared to give up the special advantages which it possessed in common with other Irish counties in connection with local taxation? Was Kerry prepared to pay half the cost of its own police, and proportionately as much as Essex did for education? The hon. Member who had proposed this Resolution had referred to the unanimity among the Irish Members who were making this attack upon the British Exchequer, but he wanted to know whether the regular Opposition were similarly unanimous on the subject. Were they anxious that the operation of a Measure which they denounced last year as wrong and vicious in principle should be extended to Ireland? There was a certain want of authentic facts and figures on which to argue this question out. The Financial Relations Commission ought to have inquired into the subject of local taxation as well as into that of Imperial taxation. But they did not do so because they knew that England had a good case. Sir E. Hamilton, however, tried to force the subject upon their attention, and one or two questions were asked about the advantages enjoyed by ratepayers in Ireland. Mr. Sexton, referring to local taxation revenue, said:—

> "No doubt, according to the Treasury calculation, Ireland contributes £250,000 and gets £320,000, so that there would appear to be an advantage to Ireland of £70,000 a year."

Sir E. Hamilton replied, "I think those are the figures." The Motion presented to the Exchequer a little Bill of between £500,000 and £600,000 a year. Its supporters overlooked the fact that there was a good set-off against that. The Irish police cost £1,500,000, and if that expense were incurred in England half of it would be defrayed by the local ratepayers. [Mr. LOUGH: "The English ratepayers would appoint them, but the Irish do not!"] Taking the figure agreed by the Financial Relations Commission as the figure which ought to be charged to Ireland for police, if paid for on the same basis as in England, he found that it was £600,000, and of that the ratepayers would have had to pay one-half, or £300,000. Then as to education, the ratepayers of England and Wales paid nearly £4,000,000 annually in rates for elementary education on a population of $30\frac{3}{4}$ millions. On the same basis the Irish ratepayers, on their population of $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, ought to have paid £569,000. They actually paid £7,287, or about £562,000 short. He thought that these items showed a sufficient set-off against the claim now made. ["Hear, hear!"] The whole system of rating in Ireland was entirely different to that in England. In the case of small tenancies under £4 the whole of the rates were paid by the owner, and in many cases of tenancies above that amount the rates were divided. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown that when it came to a question of paying, the share of Ireland was 7 2-3rds per cent., but when it came to receiving, Ireland drew 9 per cent. of the money distributed. To anyone but an Irishman that would be a good bargain. ["Hear, hear!"] It had been stated that the rates in Ireland were going up. The statistical abstract showed that in 1889-90, the first year after the new arrangement of local taxation made by the present First Lord of the Admiralty, the rates in England and Wales amounted to £27,720,000, and that they rose in 1893-4 to £31,228,000, an increase of £4,500,000. The rates in Ireland in 1889-90 amounted to £2,991,062, and in 1893-4 to £2,993,032, or an increase of about £2,000. That surely disposed of the idea that the rates in Ireland were rising in an alarming way. If any farmer at all had a bounty operating in his favour, it was the Irish farmer, who had all the advantages conferred on him by the Land Acts. The truth of the matter was that the Irish farmer wanted to keep all the advantages he possessed at present, and also to come in for a share of the little advantage the English farmer might get. They wanted to keep all the preferential treatment they received in the matters of police and education, and also to share any crumb of assistance the English farmer received. ["Hear, hear!"] A very quaint objection was raised that the £40,000 a year given to Ireland under the County Councils Act was used to set in motion the Irish Land Acts. This motion was made in favour of the Irish farmer. That £40,000 was intended to help all the ratepayers in Ireland, but the agricultural population got hold of it and used it for their own purposes. For the reasons he had stated he should certainly oppose this Motion, and he hoped that all English Members, not only on account of the interest of which the hon. Member for Londonderry had spoken, but also from a desire to do justice to Ireland and some little justice to England, would join him in his opposition. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. J. A. RENTOUL (Down, E.) said that the three Irish Members who had already spoken had all got some particular grievance in connection with the action of the Government. The mover of the Motion objected, of course, to the very existence of the Government, and to everything the Government did. The hon. Member for the County of Dublin had also a grievance of his own, and he was followed by the Member for Dublin University, who had a great grievance with regard to the shocking treatment the Government meted out to his friends and protegés, the Irish landlords. The hon. Member also referred to the ancient grievance of the disestablishment of the Irish Church. He was himself in the position of being an Irish Member without a grievance as far as the Government was concerned up to the present. He came to the House anxious to hear all that could be said on both sides of this question. He naturally expected to hear a powerful and complete reply from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the hon. Member for Londonderry; but as far as he could judge, the right hon. Gentleman gave no answer to any single portion of the speech of the hon. Member. The hon. Member who had just sat down had used a considerable number of arguments they were accustomed to hear in reference to this matter. He had himself used some of those arguments when speaking on a platform in his constituency of a Member of the present Government. He was trying to show the excellent financial position of Ireland, and the excellent treatment Ireland was receiving in this matter. He was satisfied with the speech himself, but whether that satisfaction extended to the bulk of the audience or not he did not know. It certainly did not extend to the hon. Member for the division—[*laughter*]—because he took him to task and told him he was all wrong. The hon. Member was interested in this matter, although a Member of the present Government, and he pointed out a number of matters which set him thinking, and he had not used the same arguments again. [*Laughter.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his reply to the hon. Member for Londonderry, said that the Act of last year would not be a boon to the tenant, because when present tenancies ended, it would be a boon to the landlords. The contention of the supporters of the Motion was that it was a boon to the Englishman, and they were not concerned with the question whether it was a boon to the landlord or the tenants. They contended that an Act on the same lines should be passed for Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer went on to say that the hon. Member for Londonderry might as well argue that the benefits the Irish farmer enjoyed under the Land Acts were a bounty to the Irish farmer against the English farmer. Those who represented agricultural constituencies in Ireland did not look upon this at all as a bounty to the Irish farmer, but merely as a provision to force Irish landlords to do towards their tenants what English landlords had done and were doing with regard to their tenants. The Chancellor of the Exchequer denied that there had been the same complaints with regard to local taxation in Ireland as there had been in England. But what did it matter whether there had been the same volume of complaint or not? The question was, where did justice lie? Where was the right in this question? Seeing that all the Irish leaders and all their followers of every party, creed, and class, were at one in this matter, the reference of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a disunited Irish Nationalist Party recoiled upon himself. It showed that there was some justice in the claim they made. The depression in England, it was said, was owing to the fall in the price of wheat, but if that circumstance demanded special and exceptional treatment, surely the fact of the entire disappearance in Ireland of the flax crop, which 15 or 20 years ago was the great sheet-anchor of the Irish farmer, pointed no less forcibly to the extending of similar treatment to the farmers of Ireland. The old argument had again been trotted out—the price that Irish farmers were foolish enough to give for small pieces of land here and there. In Ireland there was not merely land hunger, but the strong desire on the part of the farmer to "square" his farm, and if a bit of land had been taken out of his farm, and proved an eyesore, he would give almost any price in order to get it back. But this did not apply to good-sized farms. They were almost unsaleable. He knew dozens of farms of that character that had been put up again and again, and were at this moment unsaleable. [*Nationalist cheers.*] He knew the case of a farm where the buildings cost £1,500, all in the finest state of repair, and £300 was the largest price that could be got for the entire farm, buildings and all. It might as well be said, because hundreds of men were found giving good rents for chambers in the Temple, when they would get perhaps only one brief in three years, that, therefore, the whole legal profession were earning an enormous income amongst every one of its members. No; the notorious fact was that Irish farmers were barely existing at all throughout the country. —[*Nationalist cheers*]—and were it not that they lived in a way that no Englishman of any class could possibly live, they would disappear from the country altogether. So he would earnestly request the Government to put aside once for all the argument drawn from the price given for odd patches of land here and there. It was a piece of insanity, a craze, and could not be justified. The Chancellor of the Exchequer further said he could not find that the rating of Ireland was unfair. Well, the speech of the hon. Member for Londonderry was still unanswered. There had not been one single sentence or argument to it from beginning to end of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech. If it could be and was answered, no one would be more delighted to follow the Government into the lobby. If the speech of the hon. and learned Member had contained but one sentence it would require a very elaborate answer indeed. It was this, that while Mayo and Kerry were paying 10s. and 13s. respectively in the pound, Essex was considered to be paying far too large an amount when paying 4s., 5s., and 6s. They needed from the Government an answer to that statement. When they showed that the rate paid in poor Irish counties was 10s. in the pound, and in the worst English county, Essex, the rate was 4s. 6d., they could not continue to say that it was all talk that came from Ireland. They had not on this occasion Irishmen set against Irishmen, but they had all the Irish Members and all the Irish people speaking with one voice. Here they had the landlords' representatives and the tenants' representatives saying the same thing. He asked the English Members around him to look into this matter, and not follow the Government blindly into the Lobby —a Government which he admired and respected — but to judge the matter on its merits. He believed that the Government were taking a wrong view on this question. No one could doubt his loyalty to the Unionist cause. He asked his hon. Friends to consider the fact that ten or twelve Unionist Members who had spoken for the English Members at the Election, joined in supporting this Motion. There had been money demands made from Ireland that were foolish, and they were laughed out of the House, but this was not a case of that kind. He said to his hon. Friends: "If you are satisfied that the Government have answered the speech of the Member for Derry, by all means vote with the Government; but unless you think that that has been done, then do not follow the Government into the Lobby on a matter of this sort." The President of the Local Government Board said last year that he was afraid the income of the farmers was either nothing or inadequate. This far more than applied to the Irish farmers, who were many of them, near the verge of starvation. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore, these words of the President of the Local Government Board applied with ten-fold greater force to Ireland. The Member for Derry quoted three reasons for the Bill of last year: the first was under pressure of Imperial taxation; secondly, the heavy pressure of rates on farmers; and thirdly, that agriculture was in a depressed condition. Could the right hon. Gentleman show that these conditions did not apply to Ireland? It was said that a large number of people were desirous for a University, but a large number did not want a University; therefore, speaking as one of the Unionist Members, he said, "Keep your University for the present, at any rate, and apply the money to this matter of taxation which is pressed upon you." As to the proposed Board of Agriculture, he failed to see how a Board in Dublin, however good it might be, or however much money they placed at its disposal, could deal with the most pressing difficulties that existed in many parts of Ireland. He did not agree with the wholesale denunciation of the Government by the Member for Dublin University, for many of the Unionists considered that the Land Act was on the right lines. He hoped the Government would back up that Act by a generous treatment of this question. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. C. A. CRIPPS (Gloucester, Stroud) assured his hon. and learned Friend that the English Members were anxious to do equal justice to Ireland. Were the conditions as to rates in Ireland constituted on the same basis as the rates in England, and were they so constituted that they could fairly compare the rating of the two countries? There was a crucial difference between them, and this was the fallacy which underlay the speech of the hon. Member for Londonderry. Speaking as a Member of the Royal Commission on this subject, he cordially hoped that when their labours came to a conclusion they should be able to advise a system which would operate equally over every part of the United Kingdom... If they could do that, then it would be possible, instead of adopting the principle of the equivalent grant, they could adopt the principle advocated by the hon. Member for Londonderry for every part of the three Kingdoms. If the amount of the equivalent grant for Ireland was not sufficient, then he would say let it be adjusted and enlarged. ["Hear, hear!"] But what was the complaint on the present occasion? It was not a complaint of the injustice of the equivalent grant as regarded the rating question. He reminded hon. Members from Ireland that the Rating Act was passed for a limited time. [An hon. Member: "It was promised that it should be continued!"] He regarded that Act, not as a matter of relief to the tenant or the landlord, but as the first step of reform dealing with an industry which had been subjected to a particular strain. They, the English Unionists, had taken great trouble to make themselves acquainted with this rating question in Ireland, fully determined that there should be a fair adjustment between the two countries. In England the rate was adjusted from year to year, except in London; but there was no such system in Ireland, where Griffiths' valuation, carried out gradually between 1850 and 1865, prevailed. No doubt the system operated in favour of the South of Ireland as compared with the North, owing to the change of prices during the years which intervened. He did not think his hon. Friend would say they should apply to Griffith's system the same principle which they applied to the system here, where the rate was adjusted every year. He denied that the amount of the rate in the pound was a fair test as to the burden of local taxation unless they associated with that the basis on which the rate was made. What were the items considered in connection with Griffiths' valuation? Wheat, oats, barley, beef, mutton, bacon and flax. Wheat was not now cultivated to any considerable extent in Ireland; but all the rest of the articles he had mentioned were worth per cwt. more now than when Griffiths' valuation was made. That was a complete answer to the statement of the hon. and learned Member for Londonderry that the mere fact that rates were 13s. in the pound was sufficient to establish his case. The basis of valuation in Ireland had not been reformed since 1850, when prices on which the valuation was made were all lower than they were now. As to the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University, to whom every Unionist Member listened with respect on all Irish questions, the right hon. and learned Member had overstated his case on one point. No doubt, the Irish landlords had been treated somewhat harshly and ungenerously; but the right hon. and learned Member forgot that while in England rents had fallen rapidly between 1882 and 1897, in Ireland the operation of the Land Act of 1881 had been to keep rents at a level which they would not have maintained if ordinary economic conditions had come into play. The unfortunate result was, that having been so kept up for 15 years, a readjustment naturally involved a very large reduction, which bore hardly on the landlord, though previously to the adjustment it was the tenant who suffered. It was a great pity that land in Ireland was not treated, as in England, on an economic basis. The fact that by the Act of 1881 Irish rents had been kept up while English rents had fallen, in some cases from 70 to 90 per cent., was the severest satire on the passing of an Act which did away with the ordinary economic considerations. The right hon. Member for Dublin University, however, had dwelt only on those effects of the Act which had been harsh to the landlords; he had left out of account what was favourable to the landlords. Assuming that the agricultural depression had been as severe in Ireland as in England—and he did not think that was the case, because Irish agriculture depended less on arable land—that did not make it fair to apply the same Rating Act to both countries, until the basis of valuation was made the same in both countries. When that was done, he hoped that there would be one rating law for the whole of the United Kingdom. But at present there was no reason why the principle of equivalent grants should be departed from on the present occasion. If justice were to be done, there must not be a pretence of similarity where none actually existed. The differences of the conditions obtaining in the two countries must be taken into account. He had not heard it said that the equivalent grant was too small; and, on behalf of Unionist Members, he protested against the assertion that in supporting the Government on this occasion they were doing anything but obtaining equal justice and equal treatment for England and Ireland. [*Cheers.*]

MR. SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said that the vote of the House on this Resolution would be a test vote. If the majority voted against the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Londonderry, it would show how vain it was for the Irish representatives of all opinions to agree in order to obtain what they believed to be a measure of simple justice. In every part of Ireland there had been meetings pressing upon the Government the extension to Ireland of the English Agricultural Rating Bill. Almost every grand jury passed a resolution to that effect at the last assizes, and almost every municipal body of importance had passed a similar resolution. On April 30th a great meeting was held at the Dublin Mansion House, at which prominent men of every shade of opinion were present, and a resolution was passed urging the Government to extend the Rating Bill to Ireland, and calling upon every Irish representative to support the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Londonderry. Pronounced Unionist Members of the House had supported this claim, and, with the exception of the official Members, every Irish Member supported it. The whole case of the hon. and learned Member for Stroud was that the basis of valuation was different in England and in Ireland. He assumed that Griffith's valuation was an under-valuation, but anyone who had any experience of Irish affairs knew that, whatever that valuation might have been from 1850 up to 1860, it was now considerably higher than the actual value of the land. There was another fallacy in the hon. and learned Member's contention. The very fact that the valuation in England was being constantly revised made that valuation a better test of the actual rating power of a farm. In Ireland, however, Griffiths' valuation was made a standard of taxation, so that the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman was really opposed to the view he put forward. There was one thing in the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech, however, which he heard with considerable satisfaction, and it was the first time he had heard it proclaimed by an hon. Member opposite that the rents fixed under the Act of 1881 were excessive. It was generally contended that they were ruinous to the landlords, but now they had it admitted that these rents were excessive. Passing from the speech to which they had just listened, he said that to wander into the question of the financial relations of England and Ireland, or into that of whether Ireland ought to be treated as a separate entity, only confused the issue. The effect of this Resolution being carried and made a basis of legislation would be to assist all classes in Ireland, and that was the reason there was such singular unanimity amongst all the Irish Members on this subject. The more important local taxes in Ireland were the poor rate and the county cess. The poor rate was payable in equal moieties by the landlord and tenants. In cases where the valuation was under £4 the whole of the poor rate fell upon the landlord. The whole of the county cess, *prima facie*, fell on the tenant;

there might be rare cases in which the county cess was divided, but speaking generally, it fell on the tenant, and it would be an enormous boon to the tenants if they were placed on the same footing as their fellow-tenants in England, and if the consolidated funds or the Exchequer were to relieve them of half the rates. The question was not whether the sum to be allocated should be £733,000 or £120,000. It was vain for any person knowing Ireland to argue that there was not the greatest possible depression in that country—there was much greater depression there than in England. Anyone who drove through that country, anyone who dealt with the people, whether as a professional man or otherwise, knew that the struggle for existence in Ireland by the farmers was painful to witness; and in a great assembly, in that, the greatest Council of the world, it was simply vain to have it questioned that there was greater distress in Ireland now, and had been for many years, than in any part of England. The standard of living in Ireland was so low that the people were able to exist upon what the English tenant would starve upon. Were these people always to continue to live in that way? If English representatives were satisfied of that which they should be satisfied, viz., that the depression in Ireland was a growing evil, let them do simple justice to Ireland by giving the same relief to tenants in Ireland that was extended last year to England, and to some extent to the tenants in Scotland. The rates in the County Kerry, exclusive of the railway rates, were 7s. or 8s. in the pound, and was it proposed to give to Kerry tenants and to the tenants of Mayo, whose rates were as high as 12s. in the pound, relief by setting up a mockery of a Board of Agriculture in Ireland. Were the poor creatures who were hardly able to scrape out of the worn-out soil an existence to be put off by having professors and lecturers going through the country preaching how they could get a means of livelihood from the wretched soil and bogs where they lived? Admit the principle, that the tenant, or whoever paid the rates, should be relieved of a moiety of those rates, and let it afterwards be discussed what was a proper standard of relief.

On the return of Mr. Speaker, after the usual interval,

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.) said the hon. and learned Member for Londonderry had made an unanswerable speech, and those who had followed him on the opposite side had evaded the main points at issue. He had never heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer to worse advantage than on the present occasion, and the reason was that he had a very bad case. It might be imagined from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that, although there was admittedly great depression in this country, that depression did not extend to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman expressed, moreover, an opinion that there was no particular grievance in Ireland with regard to over-taxation, because the Irish people had not made their voices heard in any remarkable way on the subject. The inference to be drawn from that was that, no matter what grievance Ireland might have, it would not be recognised and taken into account until there was a vigorous agitation in the country on the subject, as was the case when rents were not acknowledged to be unreasonable until the country was almost convulsed with agitation. He did not think a very much worse lesson could be given to the people of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman said that no claim had ever been made, and he cited sums of money that had been allocated to Ireland. They had very many wants in Ireland, and it was true that when money had been allocated they had endeavoured to meet the most pressing want of the moment, such as the education of the people, or the erection of cottages for labourers. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman, with his knowledge of Ireland, would acknowledge that the people of their country had been housed in a condition not seen in any other civilised country, and that they could not have put the wretched, paltry sum given to them from Imperial sources to better use than by alleviating the condition of these people and giving them decent houses to live in. It could not surely be argued that over-taxation was not felt as a grievance in Ireland, because they had assisted these people in their desperate plight. The right hon. Gentleman said that the cases of Great Britain and Ireland were dissimilar, and quoted in proof the absence of the cultivation of wheat in the latter country. But what were the facts? Exclusive of woods and plantations, they had in Great Britain at present about 30 millions of acres under cultivation, while the cultivated area in Ireland at present, exclusive of woods and plantations, was 14,852,000 acres. The assessment valuation of great Britain was 39 millions for agricultural purposes, in Scotland it was six millions, and in Ireland ten millions. If they took the actual acreage, Ireland was entitled to 50 per cent. of the remission that was made in Great Britain; and if they took the assessable value, Ireland was entitled to a remission of from 18 to 20 per cent. And yet, although they were entitled to a sum of £750,000, they were only to get £150,000, with which sum it was proposed to found a Board in Ireland. Many of them thought that they had too many Boards in Ireland already. All acknowledged that these Boards were utterly unrepresentative, and did not possess the confidence of the people. When, some years ago, it was found necessary to found a Board in this country, they did not look to the local rates in order to effect their purpose. But when Ireland was concerned, it was said that the local rates should bear the cost of founding and equipping this Board. He pointed out that, although the population of Ireland was steadily decreasing, the local taxation was increasing. That was an unhappy state of things, but it existed nevertheless. Various causes had been assigned for it, amongst them emigration. Agriculture in Ireland was in a far worse condition than in England. Large towns, which in England were such an advantage to a large radius of country round, were few in Ireland. The bulk of the people were poor and led an existence few English people could understand. In England there were large industries which did not exist in Ireland, and more than 65 per cent. of the population lived solely by agriculture. The Members from Ireland maintained that they had an unanswerable case. They did not ask for any particular favour, but merely for their rights. It used to be said that Ireland was "the spoiled child of the Treasury." But he considered that she had been the "despoiled child." Ireland was taxed in every way and given little in return. It was a happy omen that all sections of Irish Parliamentary representation were united on this subject. They put the case of Ireland before the House. If they did not grant it they would play into their hands in Ireland; if they granted it they would be doing a simple act of justice. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said that if the strength of a case was to be judged by the weakness of the reply made to it then the case that had been presented by the hon. and learned Member for Derry was a very strong one. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was second to no one in the House in his power of framing an argument, and in his lucidity in expressing it, but it was the opinion, not confined to one side of the House, that he had completely failed to answer the case put forward by the Member for Derry. What were the extraordinary assumptions they were asked to make? One was that it was questionable whether the rebate of half the rate was a boon to the English occupier.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I said it was not a bounty.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: But a boon given to the English agriculturist which was not given to the Irish agriculturists, who worked under parallel circumstances, must be a bounty. It was a boon to the English agriculturist, and was intended when the Bill was introduced to be so. The President of the Board of Agriculture, when introducing the Bill, used these words:—

> "This is a Bill to give relief from agricultural depression. We trust and believe the proposal may and will do something to arrest the progress and lessen the load of that depression which is crushing the very life out of the chief industry of the country, and give some measure of encouragement to those who against hope are still gallantly struggling against that depression."

This and many other quotations which he could give showed that it was the deliberate intention of the Government to put this money straight into the pocket of the English agricultural occupier. But, then, the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked them seriously to believe that while the agricultural depression in England and Scotland warranted the Agricultural

Rating Act there was no corresponding depression in Ireland. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dublin University that if that argument was to be maintained the operations of the Land Commission in Ireland were more doubly damned than he believed them to be. Every day they were assenting parties to the reduction of agricultural rents in Ireland, on the ground that the value of land had declined, and that agricultural depression in the United Kingdom had spread over Ireland. That was the only basis on which the so-called Judges could honourably lower rents in Ireland. To ask him to believe that agricultural depression, which had done so much damage in England and Scotland, was an unknown factor in Ireland was asking him to believe more than his conscience would permit him to do. Granting that there was ground for differentiation, what had that to do with it? The hon. and learned Member for Stroud tried to convince them that Griffiths' valuation had a varying standard in different parts of Ireland, and was lower in the south than in the north, and the standard of rating and valuation was different in Ireland from England. But what on earth this had to do with the question whether the Agricultural Rating Act should be applied to Ireland he could not understand. It had been said that we ought always to follow the principle of distribution which had commended itself to the House—a division according to fixed proportions—and when we had a certain amount set aside from the revenue of the country for the local purposes of the United Kingdom they ought to allot that amount according to agreed proportions. There might be good reason for that course in certain circumstances, but those circumstances had not arisen in this case. They had a certain definite principle laid down for the relief of a distressed industry, and the whole object of the Agricultural Rating Bill was the relief of a definite specified industry. Why in the world should that principle be scattered to the winds as far as Ireland was concerned? Differentiation was made on a totally different ground. In Scotland it was found that allocation on the principle of arithmetical proportion did not involve a large expenditure on the part of the Exchequer, but that in Ireland it would. It was said that the expenditure was too large, and that they ought not to incur it. Why, it was on the ground that agriculture was the largest and most important industry in England that Parliament was asked to give it assistance. But if that was true of England, was it not infinitely more so of Ireland? ["Hear, hear!"] It was the largest and, indeed, with a few exceptions, the only industry of Ireland; and surely it was common sense to say that if the largest industry in England, being agriculture, was to be benefited in this way, it was equally fair to grant the same relief to that industry which was far the largest in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] He was unable to see on what logical grounds the Chancellor of the Exchequer could support his opposition to the motion of the hon. Member for Derry City. For the first time since the Union there was absolute unanimity on the part of the representatives of Irish constituencies, and, while in other matters he differed very largely from them, on this question he was no whit behind his colleagues in the representation of Belfast or from Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] He had been for six or seven years trying to convince his constituents that the only salvation for them politically was by adhering to the principle of equal treatment for all parts of the United Kingdom. He had been recently endeavouring to enforce the view of the Government with regard to the financial relations question, and to convince his constituents that England, Ireland and Scotland were not to be regarded as separate entities in financial treatment. He should be adopting an attitude not only in conflict with that, but should also be taking up a position which was absolutely contemptible and ridiculous from his own point of view, if he were now to go to Belfast and try to unteach his constituents everything he had been striving to teach them, and, in a case where there was a slight pecuniary advantage to the Exchequer, induce them to reverse the judgment he had asked them to form and regard as false the opinions he had formerly expounded to them. [*Cheers.*] Unless stronger reasons were given to the House for rejecting this Motion than had been advanced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, hon. Members from Ireland would be justified in saying they had not been met fairly in this matter, and there would be what he had always urged was one of the greatest dangers that could possibly overtake the Unionist Party and the country at large—a real, unredressed grievance which had been temperately stated in the House of Commons, and which had not received proper attention from a Unionist Government. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) observed that it seemed to him that the real issue was not so much whether Ireland would get an advantage out of this, or whether England would; but the real question was on what basis had they at the last five elections acted concerning the legislation between Great Britain and Ireland? It had been his lot to be a candidate in the elections of 1880, 1885, 1886, 1892, and 1895, and at every one of these elections, especially in the heated times of 1880, 1885, and 1886, he pledged himself, in opposing all idea of Home Rule, that they should go in for a systematic arrangement, by which the legislation of the two islands should be, as far as possible, practically the same. No doubt it was true that there were great differences in the position of the land in Ireland and the land in England. But since the year 1885, and especially in the present Parliament, it seemed to him they had been doing their utmost to increase rather than reduce those differences, and he asked himself, in considering a matter such as this, why could they not continue on the principles which they so emphatically laid down in the elections to which he referred? In 1886 Lord Randolph Churchill, who was certainly one of the leading members of the Unionist Party, spoke continually all over the country, and he had a good deal to do with him on many occasions, for, the Conservative Party not being then so flourishing as now, the services of many people were gladly received. Speaking as Leader of the House concerning various questions connected with local government and other matters in Ireland, Lord Randolph Churchill said:—

> "The signposts of our policy were at that time (January 1886), and are still, equality and similarity, and, if I may use such a word, simultaneity of treatment so far as practicable."

He regarded the statement that was then made as the key-note of their policy, namely, the doing away with differences; and whether it cut against their financial interest or tended in the other direction, he considered they should adopt the principle that in all these Measures they should have one law for both countries. In this particular case it was possible that the Irish Members had somewhat exaggerated the circumstances, and the amount they might get if there was an alteration. But, whether that was so or not, it seemed to him that they did not do away with the feeling of discontent, and they could not meet their constituents fairly if they passed a law giving a large amount to the agricultural interest in England, and denied it to the same interest in Ireland. He himself was not enamoured with the Act passed last year. He should have much preferred to have taken the subject of local taxation as a whole and dealt with it properly while they were about it. But it was passed on the very plausible and reasonable idea that English agriculture was in a very depressed state. But the last Land Bill they passed for Ireland was based on the idea that Irish agriculture was worse than the English, and on that ground they consented to do what many of them thought was an unfair act to those Irish landlords who had always been loyal to the Union for generations past, and from whom a large slice of their property was taken simply because agriculture in Ireland was then said to be even more depressed than it was in England. They could not blow hot and cold, they must do one thing or the other; and if it was true that the condition of Irish agriculture justified the passing of the Act of last year in connection with land, all he had to say was that that cut away the ground from the Government asserting that they ought not to give the same measure of justice to Ireland which they gave to England last year. Ever since he had been in the House he had endeavoured to be uniform and consistent in his policy, and for that reason he should vote for the Resolution, believing that the right principle must be that similar laws and similar justice must be meted out to Ireland as to England if they were to maintain the Union, as he sincerely trusted they should.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) commented on the unity which prevailed among all the Irish representatives on this question, remarking that the position taken up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was becoming more and more untenable as speech succeeded speech. He was considerably surprised that the hon. and learned Member for Stroud should have invited them to leave the agricultural aspect of this question out of sight altogether. But it was utterly impossible to approach the consideration of the question as far as Ireland was concerned without taking the agricultural aspect of the case into account. The cardinal point of the case was that they had but one main industry in Ireland, and that was agriculture, and there could be no proper appreciation of the question if this was left out of consideration. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to a union, that of Belmullet, with the conditions of which he was personally very well acquainted. The right hon. Gentleman charged the high rating of that union with having been brought about by mismanagement on the part of the Guardians. He was present in that House during the Debate when the hon. Member for North Mayo—in which constituency this union was situated—brought forward the most alarming and distressed conditions of the people of that union, and he was surprised to hear the Chief Secretary get up on that occasion and tell them that the remedy for the state of things that existed in the union was to provide for the large number of outdoor and indoor relief cases out of the rates of the union. Did the right hon. Gentleman know what the rates of the union were? It would scarcely be believed that that union, covering an area of 130 square miles, was only valued at something like £10,000, and that the poor rate went so high as 10s. in the pound. He could compare the argument of the Chief Secretary to nothing so much as to feeding a dog off its own tail, and in this case there was very little of the tail left. The argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the conditions of taxation in Ireland were different to those in England, and that they had no land tax and no school tax to pay, did not tally with the Report of the Financial Relations Commission. Considerable stress had been laid on the question as to the method in which relief should be given. He was not particularly enamoured with some of the systems under which taxation was managed. For instance, he thought they required a very radical change as regarded the system of grand jury management. With regard to the administration of the poor law, he could say that, when the ordinary Irish Poor Law Guardian went into the board room and had to take charge of his own money and see how it was laid out, there was no harder individual to be found and none who was less generous, he was sorry to say, in many cases, to the poor. The charge of extravagance and mismanagement against the Poor Law Guardians of the money entrusted to them utterly broke down. As regarded the county cess, while he disapproved strongly of the system under which the county cess was collected and distributed, nevertheless there was this consolation about it, that it was collected and distributed in Ireland. It did not find its way into other channels; and they were, of course, hopeful that at some future date there would be some change in the system. The case that presented itself to their minds was, that while the Government had taken pains to relieve the pressing wants of the agricultural population in England by giving them half the rates, in Ireland, with its declining and poorer population, there was no effort made to relieve the condition of the people or to stanch any of the wounds from which they suffered as a result of their grievances. He thought there never was a more unanswerable case made out from both sides of the House than had been made out in that Debate, and he should not be greatly surprised—indeed he should hopefully look forward to it—if the Government were defeated unless they put before the House a better case than they had up to the present time.

*Mr. LECKY (Dublin University), who was received with Nationalist cheers, said it semed to him that the real arguments on which this whole controversy turned, and on which they should vote, might be compressed into very few words. Last year they passed a Measure paying half the local taxes of the agricultural part of England. They excluded from the operation of the Act the portion of the Empire which was the poorest, which was the most purely agricultural, and in which local rates were the most heavy, both absolutely and in proportion to the population. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The Government put them off by apportioning to them a sum which was somewhere about £600,000 less than they should have had if they had been treated on the same footing as England. [*Nationalist cheers.*] They did this at a time when a Commission, including some of the very best financial experts that England possessed, had been pronouncing that the taxable capacity of Ireland was certainly not more than 1-20th part of the taxable capacity of the Empire, while the taxation of Ireland was about 1-11th or 1-12th part. That was the case they put forward, and what were the arguments which had been given in answer to it? In the first place, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had apparently denied the existence of agricultural depression in Ireland. If that were true the Government must be strangely misled which allowed a tribunal to go on in Ireland reducing Irish rents at the rate of somewhere about 60 per cent. [*Nationalist cheers.*] If it were true that these immense reductions had taken place without any real agricultural depression, he could only say that the robbery which had been going on under the form of a judicial Land Court was far greater than even he, who held no very undecided views about the propriety or the honesty of their Land Act, would venture to assert. [*Nationalist cheers.*] It was quite true that pasture land was, on the whole, less depreciated than wheat land, but at the same time the depreciation was undoubted and real. ["Hear, hear!"] A considerable portion of Irish agriculture was of just the same kind as that of England, and if, over the rest of the country, the depression was less intense than in England, it extended over a far wider area and had a far greater influence upon the well being of the country. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that relief to Ireland ought to be proportionate, not to the agricultural area of the country, not to the distress of the country, but to the sums which Ireland paid to Imperial taxation. He could only repeat what was said by his right hon. Friend and learned colleague—was this a principle which they would ever dream of applying to Wiltshire or Norfolk? Why, then, should they apply it to Mayo and Connemara? [*Nationalist cheers.*] Then it was said that the conditions of Ireland were such that they could not apply precisely the same Measures to Ireland that they could apply to England. It was perfectly true that in many ways there were immense differences between England and Ireland, but he would appeal to the candour of English Members whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given one single reason why the process of paying half the agricultural rates of Ireland was different from paying half the agricultural rates of England. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Perhaps some hon. Members disagreed. If they did so, at all events the Irish case was invincible for asking, if not for a precisely similar remedy, for an equivalent one. ["Hear, hear!"] Could they say that they were treated in an equivalent manner when they were put off with about £600,000 a year less than was paid to England? But it did not seem to him really to signify at all whether they accepted the view which was generally adopted by English Members, who said that Ireland ought to be treated simply as a portion of England, and ought not to be treated as a separate entity, or whether they adopted the view that Ireland was a separate entity, entitled by the Act of Union and the Consolidating Act of 1816, and by all the precedents of Irish legislation, to separate treatment. Take the first of these alternatives. If there was no distinction between the two countries, what was Ireland but a group of counties rather poorer and rather more purely agricultural than the poorest and most agricultural parts of England? Take the other alternative. They then found that, according to the verdict of this Commission, on which so many distinguished English authorities sat, Ireland was already taxed much in excess of her proportionate resources, and was, therefore, pre-eminently entitled to some relief from the Exchequer. He knew the conclusions of this Commission were repudiated—[*Nationalist cheers*]—by the Government. They were going to form another Commission—[*Irish laughter*]—to inquire into certain points which he did not say might not be very properly investigated by a Commission, but he did say that the reference to this new Commission was so deceptive that it would carry no weight in the country. [*Nationalist cheers.*] It absolutely omitted from the determining influences, in deciding what was the proper proportion of taxation between the two countries, their comparative wealth and the comparative degrees of their progress. At all events, whatever might come from the second Commission, up to the present moment the verdict was in their favour —[*Nationalist cheers*]—and it only strengthened, instead of weakened, their claim to be treated in this matter of rating exactly in the same manner as the other portions of the Empire. [*Nationalist cheers.*] The Government were at present practically omnipotent. Never in our generation had there been a Government so powerful; never, he supposed, in any generation had an English Government commanded such unlimited resources. [*Opposition cheers.*] If the Government acted shabbily in this matter to Ireland, and availed themselves of this opportunity to try and diminish that to which the Irish people were justly entitled, could they be surprised that such action should produce among their followers discontent and disgust? [*Opposition cheers.*] Ireland was now perfectly quiet; agitation had gone down and had become discredited; the whole country was looking up to this great, omnipotent Unionist Government to act fairly towards Ireland. But no one who knew anything of Ireland could fail to see that there was spreading through all classes and all sections of opinion a belief that this great Government was not going to treat Ireland in money matters fairly and honourably. [*Nationalist cheers.*] He could hardly imagine any conviction more ominous for the future of Ireland, and it filled him personally with alarm. [*Cheers.*] Of all times this was the time when just and even liberal Measures ought to be carried for Ireland, and this was the Government to take the work in hand. They ought to be carried, even though the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his next Budget was not able to boast that he had paid off quite so much as 7½ millions of the National Debt. [*Nationalist cheers.*] He confessed that what was taking place that evening reminded him painfully of a passage in one of the great speeches of Speaker Forster against the Union. One of his predictions was that the time might come when the whole body of Irish representatives might say that the system of taxation in Ireland was unfair, and when the whole body of Irish representatives would be overridden and defeated by an English and Scottish majority. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

Mr. **SWIFT MACNEILL** (Donegal, S.) also submitted that the words of Speaker Forster in 1800 were perfectly applicable to the present Debate. The time, however, had now come when a Chancellor of the Exchequer, with all the authority of the Government behind him, said, in effect, that he in money matters despised the united voice of a united Ireland. Not a Member from Ireland had defended the view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because they would not and dared not do so. Where was the Secretary to the Admiralty? Where was the Irish Solicitor General? The hon. and learned Member would never get returned again for the St. Stephen's Green Division, nor would his successor—[*laughter*]—he meant his successor in the same Unionist policy. The game of the Unionists in Ireland was up, and all Irishmen at the present moment were united against the Government in order to obtain just benefits for their own country. He maintained that the policy of the Government was contrary to the Sixth Article of the Act of Union, and that for one reason or another their policy had been a tissue of barbarity, fraud, and robbery.

Captain **PRETYMAN** (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said that the question appeared to him to be this. A certain grant had been made on the Report of a Royal Commission, which, rightly or wrongly, dealt only with the grievances of the English farmer. On that Report the majority of the House decided that it would be to the advantage of England that a contribution should be made to the impoverished local ratepayer in England from the Imperial taxation contributed by Englishmen as apart from Scotchmen and Irishmen. [" No, no! "]

This grant was occasioned by the necessities of England alone. There were two distinct questions of taxation—Imperial and local. Imperial taxation was governed by the Act of Union—that the most impartial treatment should be meted out to every individual taxpayer or recipient of money from the taxes. But in the question of local taxation, wherein the three countries had been separated, each country had to find its own contribution for its own purposes. When England decided that it would be to her advantage to make a grant from the Imperial taxes contributed by Englishmen to the local taxation, this could only be taken from the bulk which was contributed by the three countries alike. But, in order to arrive at the sum to be paid to the English local taxpayer, a sum was taken in excess of what was paid by the English local taxpayer and in excess of the needs of the English farmer alone, and the excess represented, not the necessity of the Scotch or Irish farmer, but the contribution of the Scotch and Irish peoples to the Imperial Exchequer. That excess had been returned to Scotland and Ireland rather, if anything, in excess of the amount of their individual contribution. The money which had been paid to the English farmer came solely out of the English Imperial taxpayer's pocket, and not a farthing had come out of the pocket of the Scottish or Irish taxpayer. Now the Irish representatives asked that the assistance to the Irish local ratepayer should not, as in England, be taken from the contribution of the Irish to the Imperial Exchequer. They ignored the contribution of the Irish Imperial taxpayer, and, while basing their claim for relief on the necessities of the Irish farmer, they did not take that relief from the Irish contribution only. If the Irish Members could prove that one penny of Irish money had been taken for the benefit of the English farmer, they would have a right to ask that English money should be applied for the benefit of the Irish farmer.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I have heard in the course of my Parliamentary experience a great many Separatist speeches, specially favouring the views of hon. Members below the gangway, but I have never heard a more frank and candid Separatist speech than the one we have just listened to. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member has given the Union away altogether, and has laid down the doctrine of separate financial entity with exceptional force. I am not going to discuss the various points raised in this Debate, which although germane to the Resolution, do not exactly bear upon it. To-night we ought to confine our attention to the Act which we passed last year for the relief of agricultural distress. I must demur to the account which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave of its origin, and especially to his view that the chief element in the agricultural depression was the way in which this country had been affected as a wheat-growing country. The Report of the Royal Commission stated that the severity of the depression varied greatly in different districts, and that from no part of Great Britain could it be said to be altogether absent. That showed that the depression was not confined to wheat-growing counties, and the Commissioners also said that the chief cause of the calamity was the heavy and progressive fall in agricultural prices. The evidence was not confined to cereals, but extended over the whole range of agricultural produce. Well, the Act of last year gave the occupiers of agricultural land in England a present of half their rates, and separate provision was made for Scotland. Now, what were the objects of this grant? The President of the Local Government Board told us that the two objects were relief from excessive taxation and aid to agricultural distress, and the whole argument of the Government was that the grant would relieve the farmer, the landowner, and the labourer—that it would relieve the industry of agriculture as a whole. My first point is that Ireland also needs relief from excessive taxation and aid to agricultural distress. The Chancellor of the Exchequer contests that. He denies that local taxation in Ireland is any higher than in England, but we can only take the figures. The hon. Member for Thirsk, I know, told the House that there had been a heavy increase in the rates in England and a very small increase in Ireland, and he cited some very large figures purporting to show that in the last few years the amount of local taxation in England had advanced by leaps and bounds. But the increase in England was not in agricultural taxation, but in the taxation of the Metropolis, and in the taxation of the large towns, and the increase in rural taxation has been a mere bagatelle. If the right hon. Gentleman would refer to the Report of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the present First Lord of the Admiralty, and to my supplement of it, bringing it up to date, he would see that during the last 50 years there has been a decrease in agricultural rates. The increase has been in the education rate, and that has been very partial in its operation. I have always put the amount of rural taxation in this country at 2s. 4d. in the pound, including the education rate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech informed us that the Estimates of the Local Government Board were considerably in excess of what the real amount turned out to be, and I think he said the amount required now for the relief of rates in England and Wales was £1,330,000. The President of the Local Government Board told us to-night that the value of agricultural land in England was 24½ millions, so that you will see that the agricultural rate is not 2s. 4d. It is not 2s. 2d., not 2s. 1d. It is rather under that figure. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derry put the Irish rate at 3s. 3d., and I think he put it too low. ["Hear, hear!"] We have no complete figures with reference to Ireland, but taking the amount of taxation as a whole, it is very heavy; but at all events, whether you put it at 3s. 6d., or 3s., or 2s. 6d., you cannot contend that there is any distinction. If in the one case the rate is a pressure on agriculture in England, the same rate must be a pressure on agriculture in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] Whatever theory you may hold on the financial relations of the two countries, nobody can get up and say Ireland is a lightly-taxed country. Having regard to the poverty of Ireland, having regard to the fact that it does not possess any minerals, and that it relies in the main on its agricultural produce and trade, the pressure on Ireland is very considerable. That being so, there being this local taxation, which is a great pressure on the one country and is an equal or greater pressure on the other country, then comes the question as to whether there is agricultural distress. The Chancellor of the Exchequer disputed the existence of distress, but no Irish Member disputes it—["hear, hear!"]—and the Government is not without its supporters from Ireland. It has, in fact, a very staunch band of supporters from that country, and not one of them has got up and supported the Chancellor of the Exchequer. ["Hear, hear!"] There was one English Member who discovered that there was great discrepancy between the modes of valuation adopted in England and in Ireland, but that was irrelevant. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has evidently not read the evidence given before the Financial Relations Commission. The evidence given by all the witnesses from Ireland—not partisan witnesses, but independent witnesses—proved that there has been an enormous decrease in the value of agricultural produce in Ireland, and an hon. Friend of mine behind me gave conclusive personal evidence of the existence of distress in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] But there is one thing that must come home to English Members. If agriculture in Ireland is not depressed, what was the *raison d'être* of the Land Act of last year? ["Hear, hear!"] It was that there was a crisis in Ireland, owing to the fall in the price of produce, and that the tenants could not pay their rents. There is a deep-rooted opinion in the minds of authorities in Ireland, and certainly among the tenant farmers, that agricultural depression exists, or they would not ask for, and they certainly ought not to receive, the enormous reductions in rent that are now being made. ["Hear, hear!"] There could be no sounder test as to the fall in prices. I am, therefore, obliged to reject the contention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there is not in Ireland, as there is in England and Scotland, that general fall, in some articles greater, in some articles less, which has produced a different rate of agricultural depression. So far as this country is concerned, there is not the same depression in Devonshire as there is in Essex, but there is a widespread depression over the whole Kingdom, and there is a widespread depression over Ireland. Here was a calamity; the phrase used in the gracious Speech from the Throne was, I believe, "grievous disaster." I cannot think anyone can maintain that in the midst of that agricultural depression which has spread over the greater part of Europe, and which England and Scotland have both suffered from, Ireland alone is a sort of oasis in the desert. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Where did the money come from out of which that grant was made? [*Cheers.*] It came from the Imperial Exchequer of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. It came from the taxes to which every subject of the Queen in England, Scotland and Ireland contributes his full share. Out of the taxation of the United Kingdom 1¾ millions was appropriated for the purpose of the relief of a national calamity—that calamity being the depressed state of agriculture in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Scotland has had her share, England has had her share, and the object of this Motion is that Ireland also should have her share. [*Cheers.*] But, says the hon. Member opposite, you must measure her share by her proportionate contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. Every penny that Scotland has got Scotland has paid. Why stop there? Why do not you go to the counties? Has Lincolnshire paid as much to the National Exchequer as Lancashire? I think Essex will have a great deal more than Middlesex. Is the contribution to Essex to be in proportion to her contribution to the Imperial Exchequer? No; the ground is a united nation paying into a common fund and all being treated alike. The Government would not even listen to anything else. We did not say, you must give more to Lancashire and less to Essex because Lancashire contributes so largely to Imperial funds. No; we said, you must give more to Essex and less to Lancashire, because the need is so much greater. The Government said, we can draw no such distinction; all must be treated alike; and, although in Lancashire they are getting £2 an acre, and in Essex not 10s. an acre, and although for market gardens round London they are getting £10 an acre rent where others are getting £1, you must all be treated alike. The one burden is upon all in the rates; all must have precisely the same share in the fund which is being devoted to relief of rates. Well, but that is the Irish case. [*Nationalist cheers.*] You ought to deal with Ireland upon your own principles—Unionist principles. You cannot sever Ireland from Middlesex or Lancashire. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, but this relief is not given to individuals, to a class, to an industry. That is exactly where I join issue with him. It is given to an industry—to the agricultural industry. You use the word manufacture as different from agriculture. Agriculture is as much a manufacture as either cotton or iron. The agriculturist manfactures commodities—beef and bread, mutton and butter. Ireland is a great manufacturing country in that respect. It competes in the same market with this country. The farmer's case in England is this—you are not rating me as a professional man or an ordinary tradesman; you are rating me upon my whole capital and the means by which that capital is employed; you are putting me at a disadvantage with every foreign competitor. You relieve the English agriculturist, and you do not relieve the Irish. [*Nationalist cheers.*] That is a bounty, the Chancellor of the Exchequer notwithstanding. It is a bounty to the English agricultural interest as compared with the Irish. The English agricultural interest and the Irish both meet in the market of Bristol, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer represents, to sell their butter. One comes there with an impost upon his butter, and the other with the same impost reduced by one-half out of the Imperial Exchequer. [*Nationalist cheers.*] I should like to appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite. The symbol of their faith and the watchword of their Party have been complete union, complete equality, identity of treatment as between the two countries. The hon. Member for Islington has quoted his own election pledges, and he quoted a still higher authority—namely, that of the late Lord Randolph Churchill in a memorable passage. But he did not recall to the House the fact that two or three years afterwards the noble Lord repeated that declaration, and he gave us at that time an interesting piece of information. That statement was not only submitted to the Cabinet, it was submitted to the leaders of the Unionist Party, three of whom are now Members of the Government and one of whom is sitting opposite. They expressed their full approval of that statement—["hear, hear!"]—as having been made on behalf of the Unionist Party in the House of Commons. ["Hear, hear!"] And that statement has not been fulfilled by one jot or one tittle. [*Cheers.*] Killing Home Rule with kindness! Is that the way in which it is being killed? And you have hon. Members on the other side of the House whose political career and status are bound up with their indomitable opposition to Home Rule, which they denounced as unjust, denouncing the action of the Government in this matter of treating Ireland! Well, now, I put it to you as Unionists, how you can justify as fair treatment for Ireland what you could not resist if the demand came from Yorkshire, Somerset, or Cornwall. [*Cheers.*] I have heard some remarks made about the justice of the House of Commons. I was sorry to hear it said that the House would not act justly. I believe that the House, though it might be temporarily misled—["hear, hear!"]—would not, whatever Party was in power, give an unfair decision on the whole. I believe in the justice of the House of Commons. I believe hon. Members will endeavour to do justice in this matter. I put one point to you of a very exceptional nature. The oldest man in this House cannot remember an instance where all the representatives of Ireland—except those who are Members of the Government—[*laughter*]—have been united. [*Cheers.*] Now, just take the speeches. There were the two Members for Dublin University, there was the Member for Belfast, there was the Member for the County of Dublin—all representative men, all Unionist Members. I do not know whether the Member for Armagh will speak, but I believe he is in sympathy with those of his Friends who have addressed the House. [Colonel Saunderson: "Hear, hear!"] Can we shut our eyes, I will not say merely as Members of the House, but as men of common sense, to this significant, this unparalleled, this unprecedented occurrence as to a question which has arisen between the two countries in which the poor country is all on one side, and a majority, I fear, of the richer country on the other? Is this wise? Whether you be Unionists or not, whether you believe this claim to be just or unjust, is it not wise to have regard to the significant attitude of the people of Ireland as a people speaking through their representatives? Is it wise to pay no heed to the speeches of the Members for the University, who have no need to court popular applause? If Irish Members can be independent, they can be independent. After their significant speeches I put it to the House—I wish I could put it to the Government—is it wise to adopt *a non possumus* attitude, always remembering this, there is no want of money? [*Irish cheers.*] The money is there; there is no question about that. It is a question whether you will do justice to the weaker and poorer country, whether you will treat it as you have done the richer; and in the interests of the Union, the true Union, which I for one believe in and as ardently desire as any man opposite—in the interests of true union and having regard to the reputation for good faith of the people of Great Britain—I ask why we are to treat Ireland differently from the way in which we have treated England? [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down was perfectly right in one thing he said—that it is not from any want of money that Her Majesty's Government oppose this Motion. It was put somewhat offensively earlier in the Debate that it was from a kind of meanness—[*loud Irish cheers*]—it was being refused. [*Renewed demonstrations on the Irish Benches.*] I am quite sure my hon. Friends from Ireland, whatever they may think on this Motion, will not credit the suggestion that we are influenced by motives of that kind.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No cheers now. [*Laughter and Irish cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: Whether there are cheers or not, my hon. Friends will not think that of us—[*Ministerial cheers*]—that it is any want of generosity to Ireland that makes us take this step. [*Some Ministerial cheers and Irish laughter.*] I think this is too serious a matter for laughter. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said this is not a party question. We do not treat it as a party question. We have had a very interesting Debate, because it has been a Debate in which an entirely new subject has been discussed, and that is the incidence of Irish rates. One would have thought if there was this Irish grievance we should have heard before now of the intolerable burden on land as regards rates; but during the 25 years in which I have heard Debates upon the incidence of rates as a grievance of English ratepayers, I never heard the subject of Irish rates raised in any serious manner. [*Loud cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I maintain that the Irish grievance as regards rates has not been before this House in the same manner as English rates. That is absolutely true, and there are good reasons for it. There was first the topic of reducing rents. Then there are many holdings in Ireland so very small that the incidence of rates comes very light indeed. Under £4 the landlord pays the rate. [*Cries of* "No, no! not the cess!"] I did not say the cess. I said the poor rates.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): The right hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken. Under £4 the owner pays the whole of the rates.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I am perfectly right. Under £4 the landlord pays the whole of the rates; and above £4 the landlord pays half and the occupier pays half. That is not so in England; and the difference accounts for the undoubted fact that there has not been in Ireland the same rating grievance as in England. [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"] I particularly call the attention of the House to this fact—that among all the proposals made in the Financial Relations Commission for the redress of the alleged inequality of treatment between England and Ireland the relief of Irish rates had no place. ["Hear, hear!"]. If this grievance is so great, is not that a singular fact? The question is only raised now, after relief has been given to the English ratepayers. [*Cheers.*] I do not wish to say that it is not a genuine grievance, but I do say that, as far as the House of Commons is concerned, it is a comparatively new grievance. ["No!" *from* Mr. T. M. HEALY.] My experience of the House is even longer than that of the hon. and learned Member, and I have followed the question of rating closely. I say that such Motions as we have repeatedly had declaring that the burden of the rates in England is intolerable, we have not had with respect to Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There was one as far back as 1881, and the question was raised long before then. [*Nationalist cheers.*]

First Lord of the Admiralty

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The question may have been raised incidentally, but not in the same way as the English rating question. But hon. Members have still to account for the fact that the Financial Relations Commission gave no guidance to the Government with regard to rating; and, supposing that we had accepted all the recommendations of that Commission and given effect to them, nothing would have been done for the rates. ["Hear, hear!"] All this which is now demanded from us, as if it were a scandal that it should not be conceded, was never considered by the representatives of Ireland who sat on the Financial Relations Commission. [*Cheers.*] I will go back to 1888, when the question of the equivalent grant first came to be considered. One question is whether Ireland ought to have money; and the other is, if she ought to have more money, in what direction that money ought to be given. The hon. and learned Member, in introducing this Resolution, spoke of the origin of the equivalent grant as if it had been conceived in a spirit hostile to Ireland. [*Nationalist cheers.*] That is entirely unhistorical. What was the origin of it? We were handing over to the relief of English taxation a portion of the Death Duties, and at that time no demand was made from Ireland in regard to relief of rates.

SIR H. FOWLER: County Councils had not then been established in Ireland as in England.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I am explaining the position historically; I am not arguing. But County Councils had not been established in Ireland, says the right hon. Gentleman. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Well, if you have not the same local authorities, it is a question whether you can make the same rating arrangements. [*Ironical Nationalist cheers and interruption.*] Hon. Members opposite have been listened to with attention, and I must ask for the same indulgence. [*Cheers.*] These financial matters require careful treatment. This equivalent grant was originally conceived in order to save Ireland and Scotland from a disadvantage under which they would otherwise have lain. From that time certain proportions have been set aside as the contribution to England, Scotland, and Ireland. The ratio of those contributions has proved, on the whole, to be singularly fair, and has not been shaken in any degree by the examination of the Financial Relations Commission. From that time forth Ireland and Scotland have always been indemnified when any particular relief has been given to England. Now the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton says that is a Separatist doctrine. If it is, I am responsible for it. [*Cheers.*] If that was a Separatist doctrine it was conceived in the interest of Ireland itself. We thought that what Ireland received should be put on precisely the same footing; but now it is that this is a Separatist action to resist this Motion. It would be true if we were starting afresh, if there were no separate legislation as regards poor law, education, and payment of the police. ["Hear, hear!"] We are to be called Separatists because, having given Ireland separate treatment to her advantage, we follow the same principle upon this occasion. It cannot be denied that there are separate arrangements in Ireland to those in England. Ireland pays no school rate at all; but the hon. Gentleman opposite said it is not enough to state the case in this way—the Irish ratepayer has not been relieved, and the English ratepayer has been relieved. I ask, is it not monstrously unjust that an inmate of Bethnal Green should have to pay a school rate out of his poor earnings, while in Ireland the school rate is paid from the Imperial funds? [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I am arguing about principles.

MR. KNOX: I am talking about money.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I hope the hon. Gentleman thinks there is some connection between principles and money. [*Laughter.*] The real difference between us and our Irish friends and opponents, who are both against us on this occasion, is that they refuse the doctrine of set-off. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, if you accept the doctrine of set-off, Ireland owes England at this moment a million. [*Ironical laughter, and* A VOICE: "Good old England!"] The whole matter lies in a nutshell. If you do not accept the doctrine of set-off, Ireland is overtaxed; if you accept the doctrine of set-off, Ireland is not overtaxed.

MR. LOUGH: That is not the finding of the Royal Commission.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: No; because the Royal Commission would not accept the doctrine of set-off, and did not go into the question; and that is why it is necessary to have another Commission. [*Ironical laughter.*] It is very well to have one side of the account examined and reported upon, and to accept the conclusions of the Commission, without the expenditure side—the side where Ireland receives more money in proportion than either of the two other parts of the United Kingdom—being accepted. That is the issue upon the present occasion. If you consider that that which is given locally is to be taken into account, Ireland is not paying too much. I wonder to what extent hon. Members from Ireland are satisfied with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. They cheered that speech spasmodically—occasionally tentatively, if I may say so. ["Hear, hear!"] Their shrewd instincts may have told them the right hon. Gentleman was shattering the whole basis of the Financial Relations Commission. ["Hear, hear!"] I wonder whether they are prepared to take the right hon. Gentleman as their leader and their organ upon this matter. The right hon. Gentleman has not the slightest sympathy with hon. Members in claiming any reduction for Ireland as a whole. He evidently thinks that every taxpayer in Ireland ought to pay precisely the same as every taxpayer in England, and with those Unionist sentiments of the right hon. Gentleman I thoroughly agree. I welcome his sentiments as showing that the proper principle is to treat every county in England and Ireland upon the same footing.

SIR H. FOWLER: I said that was your principle.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: That was the basis of the right hon. Gentleman's argument. The right hon. Gentleman was so eloquent upon it that I thought he was expressing his own sentiments; and what is more, I believe he was. [*Cheers.*] Now, in putting forward isolated cases and asking the House to come to certain conclusions upon them I think he was more oratorical than logical. An hon. Member behind me put the case in this way: If we can prove there are a few cases where the rates in Ireland are 10s., whereas in Essex not more than 6s. is paid, the whole question is settled. We cannot treat the question upon any given special and exceptional cases, but the matter must be regarded as a whole. Let me ask the House to consider a further difference in the situation between England and Ireland. What was the system which both parties followed before the time when the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends introduced Home Rule? It was that it was not considered Separatist that Ireland should be exempt from certain taxation. Is it not natural, if the rating systems are different in the two countries, that the Government should hesitate before applying the same rules to both? I quite admit that it is a perfectly fair argument to say, if it should be proved that these two systems are sufficiently alike to admit of equality of treatment, then the question of the relief of the Irish ratepayer ought to be considered. But what we have first to do is to consider whether the two systems are alike. I maintain that they are not. We went pretty far in England when we allowed the State to pay one-half of the poor rate, which is administered by a popularly-elected local body. If in Ireland we were to give relief to the extent of one-half of the rates, you would come to this, that the State would pay one-half of the poor rate, the landlord would pay a quarter, and the occupier, in whose hands the entire power of the expenditure of these rates would be—[*cries of* "No, no," *and* "*Ex officio* Guardians"]—would only pay one quarter of the rates. [*Cheers.*] The time may come when different arrangements will be made in Ireland with regard to local authorities, and I say again, we would not wish to shut the door upon the question of rates as regards Ireland. The fact of the matter is that it is already being inquired into by a Royal Commission. The late Royal Commission recommended, as has been pointed out before, that relief should be given to British agriculture in the sense of the relief of the rates, and it was done. The Financial Relations Commission did not recommend that—

An hon. Member: It was not referred to them.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: Nor was it referred to them to say in what sense taxation should be reduced; nor as to what special recommendations they should make with regard to the spending of money which belonged to Ireland. The whole field was open to them, and the one idea that never struck any single member of the Commission was that it should go in relief of rates. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): As a member of the Commission, I desire to say that it was appointed to inquire into Imperial taxation, and not into local rates. ["Hear, hear!"]

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: If, instead of recommending a remission of the spirit and tobacco duties, they had recommended that the money should be applied in the relief of rates, it would doubtless have been a very wise provision; and I am not at all sure, if the Royal Commission should report that Ireland pays too much, this would not be as good a form of applying the money as many of the others of which we hear. I have read a good deal on the subject in the Press, and have seen a good many proposals, but the question of the money being applied in the relief of rates was taken up within very narrow limits. I hope hon. Members from Ireland will understand the spirit in which I make this remark. I do not at all say that, if it should be proved that under a general system of taxation Ireland is overtaxed, this Motion does not show the best method of applying a remedy. But then, what has got to be proved is that Ireland is paying too much; and there I must come back to the point which I know my hon. Friends from Ireland do not like—namely, the question of the set-off.

Colonel WARING: On this side of the House Irish Members agree on that question.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: If that question of the set-off is considered, then Ireland is not being unduly taxed. Let me deal once more with the question of our being treated as Separatists if we do not on this occasion follow the principle of equal treatment. In considering that point every item—education, police, and others—must be looked upon; and you cannot fairly single out a certain item, such as rates, and say: "If you do not deal with that in a certain way you are Separatists." I repeat, with all the force I can command, that our financial arrangements as between the two countries are not influenced by a desire to assist our own constituencies at the expense of our Irish friends. ["Hear, hear!"] That is a charge that cannot be brought against this Government. I do not think it is a charge that can be brought against the previous Government. Except in the case of the Home Rule Bill—and there would be no money whatever left under that Bill for the relief of Irish rates—["Hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—except in that particular both sides of the House have been anxious to deal with Ireland in a fair and generous spirit. [*Cheers.*]

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said the right hon. Gentleman had commenced his speech by repudiating the suggestion that the present Government was actuated by any desire not to deal fairly with Ireland in this matter. He never heard that statement made in the House at any time without doubting it. His experience was that not only was the charge just as regarded the present Government, but as regarded every Government. The right hon. Gentleman began by saying this was a new grievance. It was a very old one. The grievance was before him now, and the question was, what answer was he going to make to it. The right hon. Gentleman gave an interesting account of how these grants are made to Ireland. He (Mr. Clancy) thought as he was listening to him he must have been a Separatist Chancellor of the Exchequer. His account was a curious one, coming from a Unionist Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had said these grants were given in the proportion in which Ireland paid to the Imperial Exchequer. He attempted to explain that this principle was adopted because there were no County Councils in Ireland, and that she had a different system of rating. Whose fault was it that they had not County Councils in Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman had been a Member of a Unionist Government twice during the last six years. His Government had an opportunity, with a majority of 100 at its back, and it failed to establish County Councils. In the present Parliament it had a majority of 150, and no proposals to establish County Councils came from the Government Benches, and never would. The Chancellor of the Exchequer alluded to the difficult system of rating and valuation which existed in Ireland and England. The right hon. Gentleman had heard this argument answered in advance by the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton. The answer was that, whether the system in Ireland was different from that in England was nothing to the purpose. The question was whether they had to raise a certain sum of money or not. Having to raise that sum, they in Ireland were entitled to relief in respect to it, and, if so, what did it matter whether they had a different system of rating from England? ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the speech of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton as a Unionist performance. He was not concerned to defend any Member on the Liberal side of the House, but it was within the recollection of the House that the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton argued from the Unionist standpoint. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "These are not my principles, they are yours, and I contend that in your present proceedings you are acting, not on your principles, but on ours."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked whether they intended to give up their claim to the three millions if they got the £600,000. As far as he was concerned, he answered frankly he was not going to give up that claim. As soon as he got this £600,000 he would go for the three millions besides. [*Cheers.*] He was now arguing this on Unionist principles. He took his stand on the Act of Union, and he called on the Unionist Government to apply Unionist principles to Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman did not regard Ireland as a separate entity. In all the discussions that had taken place on the question the Government adopted the same view. Was the right hon. Gentleman going to treat Ireland as a separate entity or not? The sure and simple way to state the Unionist principle in this matter was that Ireland was to be treated as a separate entity when England could make money out of her by that means, and that she was to be treated as a part of the United Kingdom when it suited England's purpose. He regarded argument on this subject absolutely thrown away. The Debate on the subject had been one of the most one-sided he had ever heard in the House. ["Hear, hear!"] The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been one of the most pitiable he had heard. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had wandered off into irrelevancies, and attacked his predecessors for following the policy which he himself now followed. Everyone knew that both Parties in that country had equally sinned against Ireland in this matter. With all his ability the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not advanced a single argument against the powerful case that had been made out for Ireland. For his part he believed there was no use speaking in the House of Commons on an Irish question until they made it uncomfortable for them in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton was a believer in the justice of the House of Commons. He (Mr. Clancy) did not believe in the justice of the House of Commons, and he did not think that any Irish Member believed in it. The House of Commons of Great Britain was incapable of justice to Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] Not a single Measure they had passed for Ireland had been passed through a sense of justice, or because the balance of argument was in its favour. One would imagine that on this occasion, at all events, some sense of English justice might be displayed, because on this occasion they had the representatives of the Unionist Party in Ireland supporting this Motion. He would tell the House frankly what he thought should be done. Arguments and speeches might be of use when this question came within the range of practical politics, and when the Government came down with some practical proposal to do justice to Ireland. What should be done was, by some means or other, to produce something like a rebellion in Ireland against this system of taxation. If they could, by growing tobacco, and failing to pay duty on it, or some means of that kind—the Chancellor of the Exchequer laughed at that idea—if such a plan could be carried out the right hon. Gentleman would not laugh then. ["Hear, hear!"] On the contrary, it would have more effect than any speeches in the House. He counselled his countrymen who could effectively resist the payment of taxation to do so. He regarded with gratitude and respect the recent action of the Grand Jury of Galway, Unionists to a man, who refused to present for certain moneys which had hitherto been paid without demur. If the 31 other Grand Juries in Ireland took a similar course at every Assizes that gave the Government every possible trouble in the collection of taxes. Different speeches from those they had heard would come from the Treasury Bench. Reason and justice were of no account. Action in Ireland would alone be of any use.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said this was a remarkable occasion, the only one he remembered since he had been in the House of Commons, which now extended over a good many years, on which Irish Members of all sections were absolutely united. He left it to any man of candid mind whether any valid argument had been offered against the Motion before the House. They might have thought that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who was supposed to know all about that country—[*Nationalist laughter*]—would have expressed his views on this Motion. But the First Lord of the Admiralty had spoken instead. The right hon. Gentleman said that what struck him with astonishment was that for many years the question of rating had never been prominently brought forward by Irish Members, and he could not make out why that was. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman. The Irish Members had been so much engaged in reducing rents that they had never thought about rates. [*Laughter.*] Reducing rents was the most popular subject on which to discourse to an Irish audience, or on which to make an Irish reputation in the House of Commons. Now the Irish people were beginning to see finality in rent. [*Laughter.*] If Parliament went on steadily reducing rents 30, 40 and 50 per cent. it did not require a far-seeing man to foretell the day when it would not be possible to claim further reduction. The reduction of rates had now assumed in the Irish mind a prominence it had never had before. When the Chief Secretary brought in his Land Bill one of the great reasons he gave for bringing it in was the great fall in agricultural produce in Ireland, and the distress that had ensued.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am not aware that I said that.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON remembered most distinctly his right hon. Friend said in his speech that there had been a great fall in agricultural produce, and, Ireland being an agricultural country, that would naturally produce great distress. That was one of the reasons why the right hon. Gentleman brought in his Bill. But that was a question of reducing rents; and now, when it came to a question of the Irish people asking for something from the British pockets which they helped to fill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer got up and said it was quite a mistake to say there had been any great fall in agricultural produce in Ireland, and that the position of the Irish tenant was infinitely superior to that of the English tenant. He was at a loss to reconcile the state of mind of his two right hon Friends. [*Laughter.*] All the Irish Members asked for was equal treatment with the rest of the Empire. In the Debates on the financial relations question the argument brought forward by the Treasury Bench was that Ireland could not be treated as a separate entity, yet in opposing this Motion they declared that Ireland was to be treated as a separate entity. ["Hear, hear!"] The object of the House of Commons ought to be to strive to satisfy as far as possible the wishes and fair demands of the Irish people. The First Lord of the Admiralty told them the Government had taken half the rates off the English farmer, but that they refused to do it for the Irish farmer. Why? One of the reasons was because the Government subsidised Ireland in the matter of education, and because they supported the Irish police. He wondered, when the Irish farmer read that, what he would think! Was it wonderful that an Irishman should take a lop-sided view of their policy when he looked at the heifer that he could not sell because he was undersold by the English farmer? His right hon. Friend told the Irishman to keep one eye on the heifer and the other on the nearest policeman, and then feel he was governed by a just Government and Parliament. [*Laughter.*] The Irishman would not look upon it in that light, and would not be satisfied when he found that, because of the bounty given to the producer in England, he could not sell his butter on equal terms, and would ask to be treated on the same footing as the English farmer. ["Hear, hear!"] No argument had been adduced which ought to cause the House of Commons to decide against the Motion. The rates in Ireland had been clearly shown to be higher than the rates in England; Ireland had been shown to be the poorer country, and the Government having paid half the rates of the agricultural interest in England, with what justice could they refuse to adopt the same course with regard to Ireland? ["Hear, hear!"] He knew the Government were desirous of doing justice to Ireland, and they could not evince this desire better than by devoting some of the surplus money at their disposal in placing Ireland on an equality with the rest of the Empire, which was all that the Irish Members were asking for. He ridiculed the idea that, even if Ireland was dealt with hardly in this matter, it would shake her Unionist principles. Unionism was born in their blood, and they would stick to it to the end. At the same time, and hoping that Unionist principles would ultimately dominate Nationalist and Separatist principles in Ireland, it ought to be the object and effort of statesmen now, in this time of peace, when agitation had sunk out of sight, to prove that, without pressure, without threat, without danger, and without difficulty, they were willing to do open-handed justice to the Irish people. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) had no hesitation in saying that the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Admiralty would cause much heartburning among supporters of the Government in Ireland. He believed that they would deplore the present action of the Government, and would look to the future of their country with alarm and despair. If there was one thing more than another that he deplored it was the want of knowledge that he found existing amongst English Members on both sides of the House with regard to Ireland and Irish matters, and, though he firmly believed the finding of the Royal Commission was a just finding in respect to which no new trial should be asked for, still, for the mere purpose of endeavouring to instil knowledge of Ireland among English Members, he would, if he had had the opportunity of explaining his position, have supported the Government in opposing the recent Motion of the hon. Member for Longford. As he did not have that opportunity, his only course was to support that Motion. That want of knowledge was also apparent in the speeches they had heard that night from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Admiralty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer based his opposition to the present Motion principally on the ground that there was no such agricultural depression in Ireland as existed in England. He could only regret that the right hon. Gentleman's knowledge of Ireland fell so far short. If he had consulted the Attorney General for Ireland, who represented a northern agricultural constituency, or the Under Secretary for the Local Government Board, who also represented an agricultural constituency in Ireland, or the Chief Secretary, whose Commissioners in Ireland were reducing judicial rents by, in some instances, as much as 60 per cent., he would not have made the statement that the agricultural depression in Ireland did not require that aid which Irishmen said the local rates ought to get under the Agricultural Rating Bill. He could not but think that the action of the Government in regard to this matter would be connected in Ireland with their recent action in regard to the Financial Relations Commission Report. He could not but feel that it would be considered that, though that Report showed how deeply wronged Ireland had been in the past by Imperial taxation, the Government, with the iron hand of the Treasury at their back, had held back this money, whereas, in all honour, as in all conscience, it ought to have been devoted to the relief of both landlords and tenants in respect of local rates. He trusted that the position pointed out by his kinsman Speaker Foster as possible, so gracefully alluded to by the junior representative of Dublin University, was not about to become an accomplished fact; that Great Britain, having secured the Union, would use her vast majority of votes to refuse justice to the weaker partner. He regretted, as a supporter of the Government, the attitude they had taken up on this occasion, and he hoped that better counsels would prevail among their ranks.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that Whately once expressed his doubts about the existence of Napoleon Bonaparte, and, having listened to two financial Debates without hearing the voice of the Irish Office, he was inclined to ask, "Have we a Chief Secretary for Ireland?" [*Cheers.*] Was it not a remarkable fact that, on a question affecting the welfare and the well-being of Ireland, not a Minister connected with Ireland—the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, or the Chief Secretary, or even the Member for South Tyrone—was allowed to open his mouth? He denounced this system. Had they an Irish Government, or had they not? Were they governed by the First Lord of the Admiralty? What had the Navy to do with Ireland? [*Laughter.*] There was a time when Ireland was represented by statesmen of Cabinet rank in the Irish Office: but in two cardinal Debates affecting Ireland the English Ministers kept their Irish Ministers muzzled. [*Laughter.*] Who issued the muzzling order to the Irish Office? [*Laughter and cheers.*] Had the supporters of a Government sat so silent behind a Minister as the great Unionist Party that evening behind the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Admiralty? [*Cheers.*] So far as cheering went, neither spokesman of the Government had the backing of a single man of their own Party. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and cheers.*] It was curious that the officials of the Irish Office, who drew large salaries for looking after Irish affairs, should have remained silent, and that Englishmen concerned with English Departments should alone have been allowed to speak upon this question. And yet the Colonial Secretary once referred to "alien Boards and foreigners!" ["Hear, hear!"] Surely they were entitled to know what was the opinion of Dublin Castle upon this subject. He warned the Government that this question would crop up again and again, and dog them throughout their existence as a Ministry. The First Lord of the Admiralty had pleaded for more time, saying that they should wait for the result of the deliberations of the Royal Commission charged with the investigation of the topic of local rates. Why should they wait? The Government did not wait for the Report of the Commission when it was proposed to give England something. ["Hear, hear!"]

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided—Ayes, 219; Noes, 127.—(Division List—No. 191—appended.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allhusen, Augustus HenryEden
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G.W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M.H.(Brstol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bigham, John Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon.J.(Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen(Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cox, Robert
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lanc.S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Darling, Charles John
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)

Fry, Lewis
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Goschen, Rt.Hn.G.J.(St.G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Gretton, John
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt.Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hornby, William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
M'Calmont, H.L.B. (Cambs.)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Mellor Colonel (Lancashire)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt.Hn.A.Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myles, William Henry
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt.Hon.Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, Gen. F.S. (Cheltenham)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strauss, Arthur
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. E. (Kent)
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R.E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS for the AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, W.)
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt.Hn. Herbert Henry
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick W.)
Balfour, Rt.Hon.J.Blair (Clakm)
Barlow, John Emmott
Bartley, George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Carew, James Laurence
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Carson, Edward
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dane, Richard M.
Davies, W. Rees-(Pembrokesh.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doughty, George
Drage, Geoffrey
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt.Hn. Sir Hy.(Wol'tn)
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harrison, Charles
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.

Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Holden, Angus
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Joicey, Sir James
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch,Sir John George Smyth
Langley, Batty
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McArthur, William
McCalmont,Mj.-Gen.(Ant'm.N)
McCalmont, Col. J.(Antrim, E.)
McDermott, Patrick
McDonnell,Dr.M.A.(Queen's C.)
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McKenna, Reginald
Milton, Viscount
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Morley,Rt.Hn.John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Owen, Thomas
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rentoul, James Alexander
Rickett, J. Compton
Roche,Hon. James (East Kerry)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Waring, Col. Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Hudd'rsf'ld
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Knox and Mr. Plunkett

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Ways and Means considered in Committee.

·Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

METROPOLITAN AND OTHER POLICE COURTS BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [3rd May] further adjourned till Monday next.

VOLUNTEERS' BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

APPEAL IN CERTAIN CIVIL MATTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Third Reading deferred till Monday next.

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BICYCLES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

FOREIGN PRISON MADE GOODS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st April] further adjourned till Monday next.

BURIAL GROUNDS LOANS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT (1870) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday 18th May.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 19th May.

TITHE REDEMPTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, Etc. [17th February] further adjourned till Monday next.

MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Committee read, and discharged. Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Etc.

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [24th February] further adjourned till Monday next.

CANAL AND NAVIGABLE RIVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Select Committee [24th March] further adjourned till To-morrow.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

House Adjourned at a Quarter after Twelve o'Clock.

[INDEX.

INDEX

TO

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION).

VOLUME XLVIII. FOURTH SERIES.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1897.

EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills Read 1^a, 1°, 2^a, 2°, 3^a, 3°. Read the First, Second, or Third Time.
1R., 2R., 3R. Speech delivered on First, Second, or Third Reading.
Adj. Adjourned.
A. Answer.
c. Commons.
Com. Committee.
com. Committed.
Intro. Introduction.
l. Lords.
Obj. Objections.
Obs. Observations.
Pres. Presented.
Q. Question.
Rep. Reported.
R.P. Report Progress.
Reso. Resolutions.

The Subjects of Debate, as far as possible, are classified under General Headings, e.g. :–

AFRICA
AGRICULTURE, BOARD OF
ARMY
CIVIL SERVICE
COLONIES
CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FOREIGN OFFICE
HOME DEPARTMENT
INDIA
IRELAND
LABOUR QUESTIONS
LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD
MERCHANT SHIPPING
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
METROPOLIS
NAVY
PARLIAMENT
POST OFFICE
RAILWAYS
SCOTLAND
SUPPLY
TRADE, BOARD OF
WALES
WAYS AND MEANS

ABERCORN, Duke of
Land Commission, Rules *April* 1, 257

ABRAHAM, Mr. WILLIAM, *Cork, N.E.*
Mitchelstown Union, Election of Guardians *April* 1, 273

ABRAHAM, Mr. WILLIAM, *Glamorgan, Rhondda*
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1580

Accidents
Boat, Kingstown Harbour, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 99
Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act, Q. Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 6, 599
Loading, Liverpool Docks, Q. Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 945

[*cont.*

Accidents—cont.
Railway
Great Eastern, Overcrowding, Q Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1407
Great Northern, Platelayers, Q. Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1350
London and North Western, Death of a Fireman, Q. Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 615
Potter's Lane, Wednesbury, Q. Mr. Walford Green; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 749
Romford Station, Q. Mr. L. Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 734
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill (see that Title)

ACLAND, Right Hon. A. H. DYKE, *Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham*
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 773
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 546, 552; *April* 8, 827, 829
Necessitous Board Schools Bill *April* 6, 631

ACLAND-HOOD, Captain Sir A. F., Bart., *Somerset, Wellington*

Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 686, 687

ADMIRALTY

First Lord—Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN
Secretary—Mr. W. G. E. MACARTNEY
Civil Lord—Mr. J. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN
(See NAVY)

AFRICA

Attorneys, Rhodesia, Q. Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 262
Black (Trooper), Murder of, Transvaal, Qs. Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 864
British South Africa Company
- *Carrington (Sir F.), Qs.* Mr. W. Allan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 281
- *Lynn (Corporal), Q.* Mr. T. Shaw; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 637
- *Martin (Sir R.), Report, Q.* Mr. J. Morley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 955

Cape
- *Colony, Vaal Drifts, Q.* Mr. J. P. Smith; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 956
- *Garrison, Q.* Mr. Arnold-Forster; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1614

European Powers and (see Title AFRICA AND EUROPEAN POWERS)
Gold Coast, Qs. Mr. D. F. Goddard; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 943
Import Duty on Spirits in, Q. Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 9, 862
Jameson Raid, Transvaal, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 29, 1239
Liquor Trade, West Africa, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 8, 737
Madagascar, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 9, 837
Mombasa
- *Fugitive Slaves at, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1139
- *Railway, Q.* Colonel Williams; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 728

Niger Campaign
- *Decorations, Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 623
- *Hausa Troops, Q.* Mr. P. M. Thornton; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 511

Rhodesia, Attorneys, Q. Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 262
Slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 2, 406
Slaves, Fugitive, at Mombasa, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 9, 837
South Africa (British) Company
- *Carrington (Sir F.), Qs.* Mr. W. Allan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 281
- *Lynn (Corporal), Q.* Mr. T. Shaw; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 637
- *Martin (Sir R.), Report, Q.* Mr. J. Morley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 955

Swaziland, Qs. Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 634

[*cont.*

AFRICA—cont.

Transvaal
- *Jameson Raid, Q.* Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 29, 1239
- *Murder of Trooper Black, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 864
- *Uitlanders' Grievances, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Captain Bethell; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 621. *Q.* Mr. F. A. Newdigate; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 27, 1140
- *Vaal Drifts, Q.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 3, 1417

West Africa, Liquor Trade, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 8, 737
Zanzibar and Pemba, Slavery in, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 2, 406

Africa and European Powers.

On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Sir C. Dilke, 425, 435, 437; Captain Bethell, 432, 437; Mr. Curzon, 434, 435, 437, 447; Mr. Sydney Buxton, 439; Sir G. Baden-Powell, 441; Mr. J. Dillon, 444; Mr. R. McKenna, 447; Mr. J. Burns, 447; Mr. T. Bayley, 449 *April* 2

Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill.

c. 2R., Mr. Wingfield-Digby, 677, 683, 710; Mr. F. B. Mildmay, 680, 681, 685; Mr. J. Bryce, 681, 705, 710; Mr. G. Lambert, 682; Mr. G. Whiteley, 682, 683, 687, 691, 702; Mr. Radcliffe Cooke, 684; Mr. H. T. Anstruther, 684; Sir J. Joicey, 684, 685; Sir A. F. Acland-Hood, 686, 687; Dr. Farquharson, 687; Sir E. Lees, 689; Mr. D. Kilbride, 690, 691; Captain Chaloner, 692; Mr. J. Brigg, 694, 703; Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, 697; Mr. J. P. Smith, 698; Mr. Hedderwick, 699; Mr. W. Long, 700, 702, 703; Mr. G. W. Wolff, 709; Sir T. D. Gibson-Carmichael, 709; [Mr. Speaker, 710;] (*Division*, 710) *April* 7
Read 2° *April* 7, 710
Mr. W. Long, (*Motion*) 710, 711; Mr. G. Lambert, 711; Colonel Lockwood, 711 *April* 7
Committed to a Select Com. *April* 7, 711

Agricultural Rating (Ireland)

On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Mr. Vesey Knox, (*Amendt.*) 1618, 1620, 1626, 1627, 1634, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1681; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1620, 1627, 1633, 1634, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1643, 1660; Mr. G. J. Goschen, 1626, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684; [Mr. Speaker, 1626;] Mr. H. C. Plunkett, 1631; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1637, 1643, 1678, 1679, 1693; Mr. A. O'Connor, 1639; Mr. E. H. Carson, 1644; Mr. Grant Lawson, 1646; Mr. J. A. Rentoul, 1649; Mr. C. A. Cripps, 1653; Mr. Serjeant Hemphill, 1655; Mr. P. J. Power, 1658; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 1660; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 1663; Mr. J. P. Farrell, 1665; Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, 1666;

[*cont.*

Agricultural Rating (Ireland)—cont.

Mr. Swift MacNeill, 1670; Captain Pretyman, 1670; Sir H. Fowler, 1671, 1680, 1682; Colonel Waring, 1679, 1684; Mr. T. Lough, 1681; Mr. G. W. Wolff, 1684; Mr. J. J. Clancy, 1685; Colonel Saunderson, 1688, 1689; Mr. G. Balfour, 1689; Mr. R. M. Dane, 1691; (*Division*, 1694). Main Question Agreed to, 1697 *May* 6

Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill

c. Mr. G. Balfour, (*Motion for leave to Intro.*) 1032, 1035, 1037, 1038, 1041, 1042, 1044, 1045, 1049; Mr. E. H. Carson, 1035, 1042, 1046; Mr. J. Dillon, 1037, 1051; Mr. A. O'Connor, 1037; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1037, 1048, 1049, 1053; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1038, 1054; Mr. H. E. Kearley, 1041, 1042; Mr. R. M. Dane, 1042, 1053; Mr. J. Redmond, 1044, 1045; Mr. H. C. Plunkett, 1052, 1053; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 1055; (*Motion Agreed to*, 1056) *April* 12
Intro., Mr. G. Balfour; Read 1° *April* 12, 1056
(For Questions see Agriculture, Board of)

AGRICULTURE, BOARD OF

President—Mr. Walter H. Long
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill (see that Title)
Agricultural Rating Act, *Qs.* Mr. W. C. Quilter; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 1, 289. *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1610
Agricultural Rating Act (1896), *Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. Hanbury, Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1610
Agricultural Rating (Ireland) (see that Title)
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, *Qs.* Mr. B. C. Molloy, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1613
(For Debate see that Title)
Allotments
  Acts, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 115
  Devon, *Qs.* Mr. Seale-Hayne; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 624
Cattle Weighing, *Q.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 1, 264. *Q.* Mr. A. Birrell; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 9, 863
Death from Cat-bite, *Q.* Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 29, 1246
Estates
  Coolgreaney, *Ireland*, *Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 396
  Ormathwaite, *Listowel*, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 261
  Return of, *Land Law (Ireland) Act*, *Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 291
  Sale of, *Bantry*, *Cork*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 923
  Wallace, *Antrim*, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 935
  Warden, *Sneem*, *Kerry*, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1514

[*cont.*

AGRICULTURE, BOARD OF—cont.

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 12, 946
Food Supplies (United Kingdom) (see that Title)
Horse Breeding, *Ireland*, *Q.* General McCalmont; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 295
Land Commission, *Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. Tully, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 103. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. R. McGhee, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. P. Ffrench, Mr. M. Healy; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 266. *Qs.* Viscount Templetown, Earl of Arran; *As.* Earl of Ranfurly *April* 2, 379. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. J. J. Shee, Mr. M. McCartan, Captain Donelan, Dr. J. F. Fox, Mr. G. Murnaghan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 389. *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 509. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. Hammond, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 609. *Qs.* Lord Castletown; *As.* Lord Halsbury *April* 8, 724. *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan, Colonel Waring, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 8, 742. *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 852. *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. John Roche; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 925. *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 29, 1233. *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1597
Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896
  Reinstatements, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 736
  Return of Estates, *Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 291
  Rules, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Mar* 30, 115
Land Law (Ireland) Acts, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 525
Land Purchase, *Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. J. J. Shee; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 269
Manures, *Galway and Mayo*, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1602
Muzzling Dogs, *Q.* Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr W. Long *April* 29, 1230. *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. W. Long *May* 3, 1409
Swine Fever, *Essex*, *Q.* Mr. J. Round; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 12, 955
Weighing Cattle
  Auctions at, *Q.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 1, 264
  Scotland, *Q.* Mr. A. Birrell; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 9, 863
Welsh Land Commission, *Report*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 752

AKERS-DOUGLAS, Right Hon. A., (First Commissioner of Works, Parks, and Public Buildings), *Kent*, *St. Augustine*
Household Cavalry Exercises *May* 3, 1416
House of Commons, Members and Private Secretaries *Mar* 30, 117

[*cont.*

AKERS-DOUGLAS, Right Hon. A.—*cont.*
Houses of Parliament
Electric Lighting *April* 6, 603
Terrace *April* 5, 526
Kew Gardens *April* 8, 735
Patent Office Extension Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 589; In Com. *April* 12, 1057
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 327, 333, 334, 335; In Com. *April* 5, 591
Queen's Reign
Celebration Ceremony *April* 6, 598; *April* 9, 863
Colonial Visitors *May* 3, 1411
Jubilee Procession *April* 27, 1127, 1128; *May* 3, 1411; *May* 6, 1594
Supply
£25,000 for Admiralty Buildings (Extension of) *April* 9, 901
£16,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings *April* 9, 908, 909
£23,000 for Houses of Parliament Building *April* 9, 895, 898
£39,000 for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 902, 904
£238,000 for Revenue Department Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 867, 869
£22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 870, 872, 873; Report *April* 26, 1122
£70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 879, 886, 889, 890
£16,000 for Science and Art Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 907

ALLAN, Mr. W., *Gateshead*
British South Africa, Sir F. Carrington *April* 1, 281, 282
Budget *April* 29, 1310
Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 675
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 331
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1456, 1457, 1458, 1471

ALLAN, Sir HENRY M. HAVELOCK (see HAVELOCK-ALLAN)

ALLEN, Mr. W., *Newcastle-under-Lyme*
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1541

ALLISON, Mr. ROBERT A., *Cumberland, Eskdale*
High Court of Justice, Witness Cases *April* 5, 537

Allotments (London) Bill
l. Pres., Earl Carrington; Read 1ª *April* 5, 485

AMBROSE, Dr. R., *Mayo, W.*
Achill Island (Mayo)
Distress *April* 12, 928
Ratepayers *May* 6, 1595
Land Commission *April* 29, 1233
Outdoor Relief, Westport and Castlebar Unions *April* 5, 507

AMBROSE, MR. W. (Attorney General for the Duchy of Lancaster), *Middlesex, Harrow*
Incorporated Law Society, Judicial Duties, Expenses *April* 26, 1069
Supply
£23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1379
£5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1374

America
British Columbia, Q. Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1523
Canadian
Fast Steamship Service, Q. General Laurie; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 847
Mail Service, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1528
Tariff, Q. Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 27, 1138. *Q.* Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 6, 1599
Ivory (Mr. Edward), Case of, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 952
Parcel
Post, Great Britain and Brazil; Q. Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 404
Traffic, England and, Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 114
Postal Union Convention, Q. Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 738
Seal Life, North Pacific, Q. Mr. H. Seton-Karr; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 30, 109
Venezuela
Boundaries, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 954
Diplomatic Relations, Renewal of, Q. Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 5, 525
West India Commissioners, Q. Mr. W. F. Lawrence; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 6, 1598
West Indies, Earthquake in, Q. Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1530

ANSTRUTHER, MR. H. T. (Lord of the Treasury), *St. Andrews Burghs*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 684
Piers, Lewis *April* 27, 1128

Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Vesey Knox, 1337; Mr. J. Atkinson, 1337 *April* 29
Read 2° *April* 29, 1337

Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill
c. 2R., Mr. J. C. Williams *April* 5, 587
Read 2° *April* 5, 588
In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *April* 12, 1056
Read 3° and Passed *April* 12, 1056
l. Read 1ª *May* 3, 1405

- **ARGYLL, Duke of**
  - Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 32, 35, 38, 57 ; In Com. *April* 2, 364, 365, 376, 377

- *Armenia*
  - *Asia Minor*
    - *Northern Syria and, Qs.* Mr. J. Bryce, Mr. J. H. Lewis, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Gibson Bowles ; *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 6, 632
    - *Relief Money and Taxation in, Q.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 30, 1349
  - *Massacre*
    - *Eghin, at, Q.* Mr. S. Smith ; *A.* Mr. Curzon, *April* 8, 750. *Q.* Mr. C. J. Monk ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1129
    - *Tokat, at, Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 12, 947. *Qs.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton ; *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1135 ; *April* 29, 1242

ARMY

Secretary of State—Marquess of LANSDOWNE
Under Secretary of State—Mr. BRODRICK
Financial Secretary—Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS

- *Albany and King George's Sound Garrison, Q.* Sir C. Dilke ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 596
- *Aldershot, Volunteer Camps, Q.* Colonel Dalbiac ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 114
- *Ammunition, Rifle Meeting, Q.* Captain Chaloner ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 861
- *Artillery*
  - *Officers, Royal, Q.* Captain Bethell ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1136
  - *Volunteer, Position Batteries, Scotland, Q.* Sir C. Cameron ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 522
- *Autumn Manœuvres, Scotland, Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk) ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 4, 1522
- *Barracks, Winchester, Q.* Mr. W. H. Myers ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 840
- *Brigade of Guards*
  - *Deferred Pay, Q.* Captain Pirie ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 521
  - *Route Marching, Qs.* Mr. Arnold-Forster ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1608
- *British Troops in India, Health of, Q.* Captain Pirie ; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 30, 96. *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 607
- *Canterbury, Troops Quartered at, Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 506
- *Cape Garrison, Q.* Mr. Arnold-Forster ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1614
- *Cavalry*
  - *Horses, Qs.* Captain Pirie ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 522 ; *April* 8, 750
  - *Household, Exercises, Qs.* Mr. F. A. Newdigate, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir C. Dilke ; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *May* 3, 1415
  - *Regiments, Qs.* Mr. H. V. Duncombe, Major Rasch ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 619
- *Cavan Militia, Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 106

[*cont.*

ARMY—cont.

- *Chelsea Hospital, Qs.* Colonel Lockwood, Captain Donelan ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 5, 506
- *Crete, Presbyterian Chaplain, Q.* Mr. J. McLeod ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 618
- *Crimean Veterans*
  - *Brennan (John), Q.* Mr. J. Tully ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 1, 290
  - *Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, and, Q.* Dr. Farquharson ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1128
- *Cromarty Firth, Anchorage, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 843
- *Deserters, Q.* Major Rasch ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 116
- *East India (Officers of General List)* (see that Title)
- *Engineer Volunteers, Small Arm Ammunition, Q.* Sir H. Vincent ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 505
- *Enlistment Regulations, Qs.* Captain Pirie ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 750. *Q.* Mr. W. Hazell ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 842. *Q.* Captain Pirie ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 953
- *Felixstowe Military Hospital, Qs.* Mr. D. F. Goddard ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 407 ; *April* 9, 841
- *Garrisons*
  - *Albany and King George's Sound, Q.* Sir C. Dilke ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 596
  - *Cape, Q.* Mr. Arnold-Forster ; *A.* Mr Brodrick *May* 6, 1614
- *Guards, Brigade of*
  - *Deferred Pay, Q.* Captain Pirie ; *A.* Mr Brodrick *April* 5, 521
  - *Route Marching, Qs.* Mr. Arnold-Forster ; [Mr Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1608
- *Haulbowline Dockyard, Ordnance Department, Q.* Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 8, 731
- *Health of British Troops in India, Q.* Captain Pirie ; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 30, 96. *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 607
- *Horses, Cavalry, Qs.* Captain Pirie ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 522 ; *April* 8, 750
- *Hospital*
  - *Chelsea, Qs.* Colonel Lockwood, Captain Donelan ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 5, 506
  - *Felixstowe, Military, Qs.* Mr. D. F. Goddard ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 407 ; *April* 9, 841
- *Iceland, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 631
- *India*
  - *Supply of Beer in, Q.* Mr. C. B. Renshaw ; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 2, 399
  - *Troops*
    - *British in, Health of, Q.* Captain Pirie ; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 30, 96. *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 607
    - *Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree ; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 1, 262
- *Indian Transport Dilwara, Plague on, Q.* Sir B. W. Foster ; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 30, 1346

[*cont.*

ARMY—cont.
Manœuvres
Army, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 846. *Qs.* General Russell; Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1232
Autumn, *Scotland*, *Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 4, 1522
Married Soldiers, *Medical Attendance*, *Q.* Mr. A. F. Jeffreys; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 838
Medical
Attendance, *Married Soldiers*, *Q.* Mr. A. F. Jeffreys; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 838
Department, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 12, 946. *Qs.* Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, Dr. Farquharson; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 26, 1072
Service, *Qs.* Captain Norton, Mr. G. C. T. Bartley; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 758
Military
Hospital, *Felixstowe*, *Qs.* Mr. D. F. Goddard; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 407; *April* 9, 841
Training Camp, *Scotland*, *Q.* Mr. Munro Ferguson; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 1, 265. *Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk), Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 402
Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill (see that Title)
Military Works Bill (see that Title)
Militia
Cavan, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 106
Officers, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 521
Queen's Reign, *Diamond Jubilee* (see subhead below)
Training, *Queen's County*, *Q.* Dr. McDonnell; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 12, 948
Niger Campaign
Decorations, *Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 623
Hausa Troops, *Q.* Mr. P. M. Thornton; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 511
Officers
Militia, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 521
Naval and Military, *Queen's Reign*, *Diamond Jubilee*, *Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr Akers-Douglas *April* 6, 598
Royal Artillery, *Q.* Captain Bethell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1136
Pirbright Ranges, *Volunteers*, *Q.* Colonel Dalbiac; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1130
Plague on Indian Transport Dilwara, *Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 30, 1346
Quarter Sessions Case, *Naas*, *Kildare*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 845
Quarters, *Removal of*, *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 29, 1228
Queen's Reign, *Diamond Jubilee*
Crimean Veterans, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1128
Irish Militia, *Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 29, 1235
Militia Force, *Q.* Colonel Bill; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 12, 945
Naval and Military Officers, *Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 6, 598

[*cont.*

ARMY—cont.
Queen's Reign, *Diamond Jubilee*—cont.
Shabracques, *Q.* Lord Balcarres; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 746
Troops
Household, *Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 101
Indian, *Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 1, 262
Volunteers, *Qs.* Sir H. Havelock-Allan; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 597
Yeomanry, *Q.* Viscount Galway; *A.* Marquess of Lansdowne *April* 6, 594
Recruiting, *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 508
Recruits, *3rd Battalion Light Infantry and Scottish Rifles*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 401
Regulations
Enlistment, *Qs.* Captain Pirie; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr Brodrick *April* 8, 750. *Q.* Mr. W. Hazell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 842. *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 953
Wearing the Shamrock, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Captain Donelan, Colonel Blundell, Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 1, 277. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 529
Retired Soldiers and Sailors, *Employment*, *Qs.* Mr. A. M. Brookfield, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 9, 865
Rifle
Meeting, *Ammunition*, *Q.* Captain Chaloner; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 861
Ranges
Pirbright, *Volunteers*, *Q.* Colonel Dalbiac; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1130
Tyrella (Down), *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 745
Royal
Artillery Officers, *Q.* Captain Bethell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1136
Patriotic Commission, *Q.* Mr. H. E. Kearley; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1615
Salisbury Plain, *Purchase*, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 849
Schoolmasters, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1593
Seaforth Highlanders (1st Battalion), *Q.* Mr. F. B. Mildmay; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1614
Transport (Indian), *Plague on Dilwara*, *Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 30, 1346
Troops
British in India, *Health of*, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 30, 96. *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 607
Hausa, *Niger Campaign*, *Q.* Mr. P. M. Thornton; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 511
Household, *Queen's Reign*, *Diamond Jubilee*, *Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 101
Indian, *Queen's Reign*, *Diamond Jubilee*, *Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 1, 262

[*cont.*

ARMY—cont.
  Troops—cont.
    India, Supply of Beer in, Q. Mr. C. B. Renshaw; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 2, 399
    Quartered at Canterbury, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 506
  Turco-Greek War, Qs. Mr. E. J. C. Morton, Mr. J. W. Crombie, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. D. H. Coghill; *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. Brodrick *April* 29, 1241
  Volunteers
    Artillery, Position Batteries, Scotland, Q. Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 522
    Camps, Aldershot, Q. Colonel Dalbiac; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 114
    Engineer, Small Arm Ammunition, Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 505
    Hants Regiment, 1st Battalion, Q. Mr. W. H. Myers; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 1, 283
    Pirbright Ranges, Q. Colonel Dalbiac; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1130
    Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Qs. Sir H. Havelock-Allan; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 597
  Volunteers Bill (see that Title)
  Winchester Barracks, Q. Mr. W. H. Myers; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 840
  Yeomanry, Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Q. Viscount Galway; *A.* Marquess of Lansdowne *April* 6, 594

Army (Disease)
  Address for Return (*c.*) *April* 2, 384

ARNOLD-FORSTER, Mr. H. O., *Belfast, W.*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1660
  Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1055
  Brigade of Guards, Route Marching *May* 6, 1608, 1609
  Cape Garrison *May* 6, 1614
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 177; *Mar* 31, 185
  Penny Postage *May* 6, 1600
  Sample Post *April* 5, 526

ARRAN, Earl of
  Belmullet and Achill, Steam Communication *April* 8, 722, 724
  Land Commission *April* 2, 383

ARUNDELL OF WARDOUR, Lord
  Estate Duty, Pictures and Works of Art *April* 2, 358

ASCROFT, Mr. R., *Oldham*
  Betting Messages *May* 4, 1528
  Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1194

ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Sir ELLIS, *Sheffield, Ecclesall*
  Asia Minor and Northern Syria *April* 6, 633
  Business of the House *April* 2, 413; *April* 9, 860
  Crete *Mar* 30, 110, 111; *April* 5, 516; *April* 6, 617; *April* 12, 984
  Swaziland *April* 6, 634
  Transvaal *April* 6, 621, 622; *April* 9, 864, 865

ASQUITH, Right Hon. H. H., *Fife, E.*
  Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R., *May* 3, 1430, 1433, 1437, 1440

ATHERLEY-JONES, Mr. LLEWELLYN A., *Durham, N.W.*
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 821
  Mining Royalties *May* 4, 1514

ATKINSON, RIGHT HON. JOHN (Attorney General for Ireland), *Londonderry, N.*
  Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 29, 1337
  Assizes, Down *April* 6, 615
  Bailieborough Petty Sessions, Cavan *April* 1, 274
  Bankruptcy Assets, Ireland *April* 12, 939
  Barbed Wire Fences *May* 3, 1414
  Brookeborough Petty Sessions *April* 30, 1346
  Charge of Burglary, Downpatrick *April* 12, 922
  Distress, Ireland *April* 2, 397
  Drogheda, County Court and Quarter Sessions *April* 5, 511
  High Sheriff, Carrickfergus *April* 1, 295
  Land Commission, Ireland *April* 6, 610, 61
  April 8, 744, 745
  Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896
    Return of Estates *April* 1, 292
    Rules *Mar* 30, 115, 116
  Local
    Loans Fund, Ireland *April* 6, 627, 628
    Taxation, Ireland *April* 6, 633
  Mullingar
    Petty Sessions *April* 6, 636
    Union *April* 6, 614
  National Schools, Ireland *April* 6, 608, 60
  Parochial Records, Ireland *April* 5, 520
  Petty Sessions
    Bailieborough, Cavan *April* 1, 274
    Brookeborough, *April* 30, 1346
    Mullingar *April* 6, 636
  Protestant Jurors, Cork *April* 1, 274
  Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 483
  Sheriffs, Ireland *April* 8, 741, 742

AUSTIN, Mr. M., *Limerick, W.*
  Irish Mail Service *April* 5, 524
  Post Office Establishments *April* 6, 606
  Stationery Office Printing Contracts *April* 27, 1136
  Third Class Railway Tickets, Ireland *April* 6, 634

Australasia
Albany and King George's Sound Garrison, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 596
Passengers from, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 940

BADEN-POWELL, Sir GEORGE S., *Liverpool, Kirkdale*
Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 441

BAGOT, Capt. J. F., *Westmorland, Kendal*
Queen's Reign, Indian Regiments *May* 3, 1412

BAINBRIDGE, Mr. E., *Lincolnshire, Gainsborough*
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1578
Voluntary Schools *April* 12, 956

BAKER, Sir JOHN, *Portsmouth*
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 580

BALCARRES, Lord, *Lancashire, N., Chorley*
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 8, 746

BALFOUR, LORD (Secretary for Scotland)
Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) Bill, 3R. *April* 1, 249
Trusts (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *May* 3, 1405

BALFOUR, RIGHT HON. ARTHUR J. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Manchester, E.*
Army Manœuvres *April* 29, 1233
Bimetallism *April* 12, 953
British Museum *April* 6, 638
Budget *April* 29, 1299, 1300, 1302, 1335
Budget Resolutions *April* 30, 1352
Business of the House
  Easter Holidays *April* 1, 299, 300
  General *Mar* 30, 124, 183 ; *April* 2, 412, 413 ; *April* 8, 836 ; *April* 9, 858, 859, 860, 919 ; *April* 27, 1140
  Supply
    English Votes *April* 6, 641
    Foreign Office Vote *April* 29, 1249
Congested Districts, Scotland *April* 29, 1247
Crete *April* 1, 289 ; *April* 2, 406, 470, 471 ; *April* 5, 517, 518, 519 ; *April* 12, 957, 974, 981, 982, 988, 990, 994, 997, 1002, 1005
Crete, Ministerial Policy *April* 6, 639, 641
Distress, Mayo *April* 2, 483
Election Petitions *April* 5, 538
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill *April* 29, 1249 ; *May* 3, 1420
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 550, 552 ; *April* 8, 827, 829
Employers' Liability Bill *April* 29, 1249
Enlistment Regulations *April* 12, 954

[*cont.*

BALFOUR, Right Hon. ARTHUR J.—*cont.*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 124, 126 ; *Mar* 31, 192, 218, 241, 242 ; *April* 1, 300 ; *April* 5, 538
Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 667, 672
Foreign
  Affairs, Questions *Mar* 30, 122, 123
  Codes of Law *May* 3, 1421
Greece and the Powers *April* 26, 1076
House of Commons, Divisions *April* 29, 1247
Importation of Foreign-manufactured Goods *April* 27, 1173
Ivory (Mr. Edward), Case of *April* 12, 952
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 351, 353 ; *April* 12, 953
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 826 ; *April* 12, 957
Naval Expenditure *April* 2, 411, 412
Post Office Establishment Report *April* 29, 1248
Prime Minister, Absence Abroad *April* 1, 298, 299
Private Bill Procedure, Scotland *April* 6, 638 ; *April* 30, 1351
Public Officers (Whitehall) Site Bill *April* 2, 412
Queen's Reign
  Bank Holiday *April* 2, 411
  Jubilee Procession *April* 12, 946
  Sunday Thanksgiving *April* 30, 1351
Railways, Ireland *April* 1, 298
Retired Soldiers and Sailors, Employment *April* 9, 865, 866
Roman Catholic Schools, Scotland *April* 26, 1075
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1204
Supply : £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1372
Venezuelan Boundary *April* 12, 954
Voluntary Schools *April* 12, 956
Wallace Bequest *May* 3, 1420, 1421
Working Men's Dwellings *April* 2, 410
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1458

BALFOUR, RIGHT HON. GERALD W. (Chief Secretary for Ireland), *Leeds, Central*
Achill Island
  Distress *April* 12, 928
  Relief *May* 6, 1595
Agricultural Rating Act (1896) *May* 6, 1611
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1689
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1032, 1035, 1037, 1038, 1041, 1042, 1044, 1045, 1049 ; *May* 6, 1613, 1614
Antrim, Wallace Estate *April* 12, 935
Arrest for Drunkenness, Omagh *Mar* 30, 121
Ballinrobe and Lough Mask Canal *April* 5, 532
Belfast Lunatic Asylum, Death of Inmate *Mar* 30, 102
Bicycles (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *April* 8, 833
Clerkship of Petty Sessions, Ireland *April* 3, 394
Cork, Sale of Estate, Bantry *April* 12, 924
County Court Procedure, Ireland *Mar* 30, 101
Deportation of Paupers *April* 1, 283 ; *April* 2, 407

[*cont.*

BALFOUR, Right Hon. GERALD W.—*cont.*
- Distress
  - Listowel Union *April* 5, 534
  - Mayo
    - Achill Island *April* 12, 928
    - General *April* 2, 478
- Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 88, 89
- Dublin, Grangegorman Prison *April* 12, 938
- Education, Ireland *April* 2, 400, 401
- Eslin River Drainage Scheme April 1, 291
- Estates
  - Coolgreaney, Ireland *April* 2, 396
  - Ormathwaite, Listowel *April* 1, 261
  - Sale of, Bantry, Cork *April* 12, 924
  - Wallace, Antrim *April* 12, 935
  - Warden, Sneem, Kerry *May* 4, 1514
- Grangegorman Prison *April* 12, 938
- Grocers' Licences *April* 5, 523, 524
- Gun Licences
  - Ballybunion, Kerry *Mar* 30, 107
  - Roscommon *April* 8, 758
- Horse Breeding, Ireland *April* 1, 296
- Irish Teachers' Residence Act *April* 2, 395
- Industries (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 182
- Jurors, Tyrone *May* 6, 1608
- Kerry
  - Gun Licence, Ballybunion *Mar* 30, 107
  - Warden Estate, Sneem *May* 4, 1514
- Labourers' Cottages, Ireland *April* 8, 746; *April* 12, 941
- Labourers (Ireland) Acts *April* 1, 272; *April* 2, 398
- Land Commission
  - Advances *Mar* 30, 103
  - Culmore *Mar* 30, 104
  - Fair Rent Applications *Mar* 30, 103; *April* 5, 509, 510, 511; *April* 8, 743
  - Ireland *April* 1, 266, 267, 268, 269; *April* 2, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393; *April* 9, 852, 853, 854; *April* 12, 925, 926, 927, 928; *April* 29, 1233; *May* 6, 1597, 1598
- Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896
  - Re-instatement *April* 8, 736, 737
  - Returns *April* 5, 525
- Land Purchase, Ireland *April* 1, 269
- Licences
  - Grocers' *April* 5, 523, 524
  - Gun
    - Ballybunion, Kerry *Mar* 30, 107
    - Roscommon *April* 8, 758
  - Retail, Ireland *April* 9, 864
- Light Railways, Ireland *April* 5, 532; *April* 9, 848
- Listowel
  - Ormathwaite Estate *April* 1, 261
  - Union, Distress in *April* 5, 534
- Loan Fund Societies, Ireland *May* 4, 1517
- Longford Canal Harbour *May* 6, 1596
- Lunatic Asylums, Ireland *April* 2, 399
- Manures, Galway and Mayo *May* 6, 1602
- Mitchelstown Union, Election of Guardians *April* 1, 273
- Model Schools, Ireland *April* 9, 841
- Monaghan
  - Grand Jury, Road Repair *April* 5, 527
  - Union
    - Appeal Valuers *May* 4, 1527
    - Workhouse *April* 5, 527
- National School
  - Six-mile-Bridge, Killarney *April* 8, 747
  - Teachers' Pensions, Ireland *April* 5, 533

[*cont.*

BALFOUR, Right Hon. GERALD W.—*cont.*
- Omagh, Arrest for Drunkenness *Mar* 30, 121
- Outdoor Relief, Westport and Castlebar Unions *April* 5, 507
- Petty Sessions
  - Ballynahinch *April* 8, 742
  - Belleek, Fermanagh *April* 9, 846
  - Clerkship, Ireland *April* 3, 394
- Poor Law Amalgamation (Ireland) Bill *April* 5, 535
- Poor Law Union, Ireland *Mar* 30, 106
- Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill, 1R., *April* 8, 833
- Portumna Railway *Mar* 30, 119
- Queen's Reign
  - Jubilee Procession *May* 4, 1517
  - Release of Prisoner *April* 5, 534
- Railways
  - Light, Ireland *April* 5, 532; *April* 9, 848
  - Portumna *Mar* 30, 119
- Rates, Ireland *May* 6, 1597
- Retail Licences, Ireland *April* 9, 864
- Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 386, 387, 388; *April* 8, 748, 749; *April* 12, 933; *May* 6, 1605
- Statute Law Revision Bills, Ireland *April* 2, 401
- Strabane, Crown Sessions *April* 2, 403
- Tullamore Gaol *Mar* 30, 120
- Unions
  - Listowel, Distress *April* 5, 534
  - Mitchelstown, Election of Guardians *April* 1, 273
  - Monaghan
    - Appeal Valuers *May* 4, 1527
    - Workhouse *April* 5, 527
  - Westport and Castlebar, Outdoor Relief *April* 5, 507
- Workmistresses, Irish National Schools *April* 2, 396

BALFOUR, Right Hon. JOHN BLAIR, *Clackmannan and Kinross*
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 233
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 308

BANBURY, Mr. FREDERICK G., *Camberwell, Peckham*
- Supply: £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 875

BARRY, Mr. EDWARD, *Cork County, S.*
- Protestant Jurors, Cork *April* 1, 274
- Stamp Duty, Ireland *April* 1, 277

BARTLEY, Mr. G. C. T., *Islington, N.*
- Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1663
- Army Medical Service *April* 8, 758; *April* 26, 1072
- Budget *April* 29, 1327
- Election Petitions *April* 5, 538
- Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 567
- Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 341
- Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *May* 6, 1594

[*cont.*

BARTLEY, Mr. G. C. T.—*cont.*
Supply
£39,000 for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 903
£16,000 for Science and Art Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 905
£204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1364
Telephone Service *April* 2, 458, 462

BARTON, Mr. DUNBAR P., *Armagh, Mid*
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 8, 757

BAYLEY, Mr. THOMAS, *Derbyshire, Chesterfield*
Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 449
Crete *April* 2, 404
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill *April* 27, 1137
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1558, 1576
Slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba *April* 2, 406
Transvaal, Jameson Raid *April* 29, 1239

BEACH, RIGHT HON. SIR M. HICKS, BART. (Chancellor of the Exchequer), *Bristol, W.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1620, 1627, 1633, 1634, 1637, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1643, 1660
Brewing Materials *April* 6, 596
Budget *April* 29, 1250, 1255, 1280, 1293, 1317, 1332, 1333
Business of the House, General *May* 6, 1617
Crete *April* 12, 950
Crewe, Representation of *April* 27, 1140
Estate Duty, Late Emperor of Russia *Mar* 30, 117
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 139; *Mar* 31, 214
Income Tax, Scotland *April* 8, 731
Incorporated Law Society *April* 8, 732, 733
Irish Account, Savings *April* 1, 294
Judiciary, Ireland *Mar* 30, 120
Kingstown Harbour, Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 346
Land
Purchase, Ireland *April* 1, 270
Tax *April* 12, 942, 943
Loans, Ireland *April* 5, 536
Local Loans Stock *April* 1, 271; *April* 9, 847
Patent Office Extension Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 589
Post Office Savings Bank *April* 6, 601
Queen's Reign, Commemoration Medal *Mar* 30, 116
Revenue Returns, Ireland *April* 2, 396
Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 387
Stamp Duty, Ireland *April* 1, 277
Supply: £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1369
Tithe Rent-charge, Ireland *April* 5, 528
Trustee and Post Office Savings Banks *April* 27, 1126
Unclaimed Funds *April* 12, 923
Voluntary and Board Schools, Grants *April* 29, 1245
Votes and Grants for Local Purposes *April* 2, 420, 422, 424, 425

BEGG, Mr. F. FAITHFULL, *Glasgow, St. Rollox*
Post Office Telephone Exchange *April* 1, 260
Telephone Service, Glasgow *April* 29, 1235, 1236

Berriew School Bill
c. 2R., Sir J. Gorst, 761; Mr. Humphreys-Owen, 762; [Mr. Speaker, 762, 763, 764, 765, 767, 774;] Mr. J. H. Lewis, 762, 763; Mr. T. M. Healy, 763, 764, 765, 767, 773; Mr. E. H. Carson, 765; Mr. E. Robertson, 766, 767; Mr. Brynmor Jones, 768, 771; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 771; Mr. A. H. D. Acland, 773; Mr. J. H. Roberts, 773, 774; Mr. J. H. Johnstone, 775; Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 775, 776; Sir R. B. Finlay, 775; Sir F. Lockwood, 776; Sir R. Webster, 777; (*Divisions*, 778) *April* 8
Read 2° *April* 8, 778
Sir J. Gorst (*Motion*), 779; Mr. T. M. Healy (*Amendt.*), 779; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 779; (*Amendt. negatived*, 780); (*Division*, 780) *April* 8
Committed to Standing Com. on Law, etc. *April* 8, 780

BETHELL, Captain G. R., *Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness*
Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 432, 437
Royal Artillery Officers *April* 27, 1136
Supply: £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 913
Transvaal *April* 6, 622

BHOWNAGGREE, Mr. M. M., *Bethnal Green, N.E.*
Indian Famine, Subscriptions *April* 6, 613
Queen's Reign, Indian Troops *April* 1, 262

Bicycles (Ireland) Bill
c. Mr. G. Balfour, (*Motion for Leave to Intro.*) 833; Mr. T. M. Healy, 834 *April* 8
Intro., Mr. G. Balfour; Read 1° *April* 8, 834

BIGHAM, Mr. J. C., *Liverpool, Exchange*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 161

BIGWOOD, Mr. J., *Middlesex, Brentford*
Indian Famine, Relief *April* 12, 932

BILL, Colonel CHARLES, *Staffordshire, Leek*
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 12, 945

BILLSON, Mr. ALFRED, *Halifax*
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 577

BIRRELL, Mr. AUGUSTINE, *Fife, W.*
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 319, 326
Weighing Cattle, Scotland *April* 9, 863

BLUNDELL, Colonel H. B. H., *Lancashire, S.W., Ince*
Army Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 280
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1553
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1478

Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill
c. 2R., Mr. G. Murnaghan, 711; Mr. J. Dillon, 713; Mr. Serjeant Hemphill, 713; Colonel Waring, (*Amendt.*) 713; Mr. R. M. Dane, 716; Mr. J. Lowther, 716; *Adj.* *April* 7

BOSCAWEN, Mr. A. S. T. GRIFFITH- (see GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN)

BOUSFIELD, Mr. W. R., *Hackney, N.*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1473

BOWLES, Mr. T. GIBSON, *Lynn Regis*
Asia Minor and Northern Syria *April* 6, 633
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 771
Budget *April* 29, 1287, 1288, 1292, 1299
Business of the House *April* 9, 859
Channel Passenger Service, Customs Examination *May* 3, 1414
Crete *April* 2, 474; *April* 12, 1020
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 127
Greece and the Powers *April* 26, 1076, 1077
Household Cavalry Exercises *May* 3, 1416
Incorporated Law Society *April* 8, 732
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1203
Supply
  £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1378
  £23,000 for Houses of Parliament Building *April* 9, 890
  £22,300 for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses *April* 30, 1358, 1359
  £22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 871, 873
  £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 875, 886
  £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1361, 1368, 1369
Turco-Greek War *April* 27, 1133; *April* 29, 1242

BRIGG, Mr. JOHN, *Yorks, W.R., Keighley*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 694, 703
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 581

British Trade with Canada
Sir H. Vincent, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 27, 1125

BROADHURST, Mr. HENRY, *Leicester*
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1102, 1104
Strike at Norwich, Intimidation *May* 6, 1592
Urban Roads and Footpaths *April* 1, 261

BRODRICK, RIGHT HON. W. ST. JOHN (Under Secretary of State for War), *Surrey, Guildford*
Albany and King George's Sound Garrison *April* 6, 596
Army
  Deserters *Mar* 30, 116
  Manœuvres *April* 9, 847; *April* 29, 1233
  Medical Service *April* 8, 758
  Recruiting *April* 5, 508
  Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 278, 279; *April* 5, 529, 530
  Rifle Meeting, Ammunition *April* 9, 861
  Schoolmasters *May* 6, 1593
Artillery
  Officers, Royal *April* 27, 1136
  Position Batteries, Scotland (Volunteer) *April* 5, 522
Autumn Manœuvres, Scotland *May* 4, 1522
Barracks, Winchester *April* 9, 840
Brigade of Guards
  Deferred Pay *April* 5, 521
  Route Marching *May* 6, 1609
British Troops in India, Health *April* 6, 607
Cape Garrison *May* 6, 1614
Cavalry
  Horses *April* 5, 522; *April* 8, 750
  Regiments *April* 6, 619, 620
Cavan Militia *Mar* 30, 106
Chelsea Hospital *April* 5, 506
Crete, Presbyterian Chaplain *April* 6, 618
Cromarty Firth, Anchorage *April* 9, 843
Engineer Volunteers, Small Arm Ammunition *April* 5, 506
Enlistment Regulations *April* 8, 751; *April* 9, 843
Garrisons
  Albany and King George's Sound *April* 6, 596
  Cape *May* 6, 1614
Hants Regiment, 1st Volunteer Battalion *April* 1, 283
Horses, Cavalry *April* 5, 522; *April* 8, 750
Hospitals
  Chelsea *April* 5, 506
  Felixstowe Military *April* 2, 407; *April* 9, 842
Iceland *April* 6, 631
Manœuvres
  Army *April* 9, 847; *April* 29, 1233
  Autumn, Scotland *May* 4, 1522
Medical
  Attendance, Married Soldiers *April* 9, 838
  Service, Army *April* 8, 758
Military
  Hospital, Felixstowe *April* 2, 407; *April* 9, 842
  Training Camp, Scotland *April* 1, 265; *April* 2, 402
Militia
  Cavan *Mar* 30, 106
  Officers *April* 5, 521
Niger Campaign
  Decorations *April* 6, 624
  Hausa Troops *April* 5, 512
Officers
  Militia *April* 5, 521
  Royal Artillery *April* 27, 1136
Pirbright Ranges, Volunteers *April* 27, 1130
Quarter Sessions Case, Naas, Kildare *April* 9, 845

[cont.

BRODRICK, Right Hon. W. ST. JOHN—*cont.*
- Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee
  - Crimean Veterans *April* 27, 1128
  - Irish Militia *April* 29, 1235
  - Shabracques *April* 8, 746
  - Troops, Household *Mar* 30, 102
  - Volunteers *April* 6, 598
- Ranges
  - Rifle, Tyrella (Down) *April* 8, 746
  - Volunteer, Pirbright *April* 27, 1130
- Recruits, 3rd Battalion Light Infantry and Scottish Rifles *April* 2, 402
- Regulations
  - Army, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 278 ; *April* 5, 529, 530
  - Enlistment *April* 8, 751 ; *April* 9, 843
- Rifle
  - Meeting, Ammunition *April* 9, 861
  - Ranges
    - Pirbright, Volunteer *April* 27, 1130
    - Tyrella (Down) *April* 8, 746
- Royal
  - Artillery Officers *April* 27, 1136
  - Patriotic Commission *May* 6, 1615
- Salisbury Plain, Purchase *April* 9, 849
- Seaforth Highlanders, 1st Battalion *May* 6, 1614
- Troops
  - British, in India, Health *April* 6, 607
  - Quartered at Canterbury *April* 5, 506
- Turco-Greek War *April* 29, 1241, 1242
- Volunteers
  - Artillery Position Batteries, Scotland *April* 5, 522
  - Camps, Aldershot *Mar* 30, 114
  - Engineer, Small Arm Ammunition *April* 5, 506
  - Hants Regiment, 1st Battalion *April* 1, 283
  - Ranges, Pirbright *April* 27, 1130
- Volunteers' Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1121
- Winchester Barracks *April* 9, 840

BROOKFIELD, Mr. A. M., *Sussex, Rye*
- Brewing Materials *April* 6, 596
- Retired Soldiers and Sailors, Employment *April* 9, 865

BRYCE, Right Hon. JAMES, *Aberdeen, S.*
- Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 681, 705, 710
- Asia Minor and Northern Syria *April* 6, 632, 633
- Business of the House, Easter Holidays *April* 1, 299
- Crete *April* 1, 286 ; *May* 6, 1615
- Education, Scotland *May* 4, 1530
- Indian Famine, Relief *April* 12, 932
- Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1496
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 304

BUCHANAN, Mr. T. R., *Aberdeen, E.*
- Business of the House, General *Mar* 30, 124
- North Sea Fisheries Convention *April* 6, 603 ; *April* 8, 753
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 320

BUCKNILL, Mr. T. T., *Surrey, Epsom*
- Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 799
- Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1484

Budget (see WAYS AND MEANS)

Burial Grounds Loans (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Graham Murray ; Read 1° *April* 12, 957

BURNS, Mr. JOHN, *Battersea*
- Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 447
- Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 329, 330
- Supply
  - £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 893
  - £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 883, 884, 887, 888, 889
  - £16,000 for Science and Art Buildings, Great Britain *April* 9, 906, 908
  - £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 915

BURT, Mr. THOMAS, *Morpeth*
- Business of the House *May* 6, 1617

Business of the House (see PARLIAMENT : LORDS ; COMMONS)

BUTCHER, Mr. JOHN G., *York*
- Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1487

BUXTON, Mr. SYDNEY, *Tower Hamlets, Poplar*
- Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 439
- Customs, Preventive Officers and Boatmen *May* 6, 1609
- Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 568 ; *April* 26, 1114, 1116 ; *April* 29, 1236
- Import Duties on Spirits in Africa *April* 9, 862
- London Water Supply, Royal Commission *April* 6, 625

CALDWELL, Mr. J., *Lanark, Mid*
- Ashmead-Bartlett (Sir Ellis), Capture of *May* 6, 1616
- Constabulary, Scotland *May* 4, 1515
- Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 353 ; In Com. *May* 3, 1500
- Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 581
- Fishery Board, Scotland *May* 4, 1518
- Illegal Trawling, Danish Waters *May* 4, 1523
- Local Government Board, Scotland *May* 4, 1518
- Post Office Savings Bank *May* 4, 1515
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 307, 314

[*cont.*

Caldwell, Mr. J.—*cont.*
  Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 333
  Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 584, 585; In Com. *April* 12, 1058, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1066, 1067
  Supply
    £23,000 for Houses of Parliament Building *April* 9, 894, 899
    £39,000 for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain *April* 9, 902, 903
    £238,000 for Revenue Department Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 866, 868
    £22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 873; Report *April* 26, 1122
    £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 873, 879, 887, 890
    £16,000 for Science and Art Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 906
    £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 913

Cameron, Sir Charles, Bart., *Glasgow, Bridgeton*
  Anti-Plague Inoculation, India *April* 1, 263
  Habitual Offenders
    Adult Reformatories, and *May* 4, 1531
    Scotland *Mar* 30, 96
  Illegal Trawling, Moray Firth *April* 29, 1232
  Income Tax, Scotland *April* 8, 731
  Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *April* 1, 310
  Salt, Her Majesty's Ships *April* 30, 1342
  Science and Art Grants, Scotland *April* 30, 1342
  Supply
    £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1378
    £126,130 for Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain) *April* 30, 1394
  Telephone Service, Glasgow *April* 29, 1236
  Volunteer Artillery Position Batteries, Scotland *April* 5, 522

Campbell-Bannerman, Right Hon. Sir Henry, *Stirling Burghs*
  Foreign Affairs, Questions *Mar* 30, 122, 123
  Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 316
  Votes and Grants for Local Purposes *April* 2, 424
  Weighing Cattle *April* 1, 264

Camperdown, Earl of
  Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) Bill, 3R. *April* 1, 254
  Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *April* 2, 364, 368

Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill (see Ireland)

Canals Protection (London) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. L. R. Holland; Read 1º *Mar* 30, 128

Canterbury, Lord Archbishop of *(Dr. Frederick Temple)*
  Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 24, 44, 45; In Com. *April* 2, 368

Carew, Mr. J. L., *Dublin, College Green*
  Naval Expenditure *April* 2, 411

Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-, Bart. (see Gibson-Carmichael)

Carson, Right Hon. Edward H., *Dublin University*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1644
  Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1035, 1042, 1046
  Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 765
  Crete *Mar* 30, 113
  Custom House, Dublin *April* 6, 606
  Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 82, 87, 92
  Industries (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 182
  Land Commission *April* 8, 743
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 792, 819
  Sheriffs, Ireland *April* 8, 741, 742
  Supply: £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1366
  Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 8, 757

Castletown, Lord
  Land Commission *April* 8, 724, 725

Cayzer, Mr. C. W., *Barrow-in-Furness*
  House of Commons, Members and Private Secretaries *Mar* 30, 117
  Telegraph Addresses, Barrow-in-Furness *April* 1, 258

Cecil, Lord Hugh, *Greenwich*
  Supply: £41,107 for Metropolitan Police, Pay and Expenses *April* 30, 1384

Chaff-cutting Machines Accidents Bill
c. Intro., Captain Pretyman; Read 1º *April* 1, 356
  Read 2º and com. *May* 5, 1588

Chaloner, Captain R. G. W., *Wilts, Westbury*
  Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 692
  Army Rifle Meeting, Ammunition *April* 9, 861
  Importation of Foreign-manufactured Goods *April* 27, 1173

CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. J. AUSTEN (Civil Lord of the Admiralty), *Worcestershire, E.*
  Admiralty Cooper, Bull Point, Devonport *April* 5, 537
  Coopers, Deptford Victualling Yard *April* 8, 755
  Haulbowline Dockyard *April* 9, 854
  Sailors' Home, Cork *April* 8, 754

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. JOSEPH (Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Birmingham, W.*
  Attorneys, Rhodesia *April* 1, 262
  British
    Columbia *May* 4, 1524
    South Africa Company
      Carrington (Sir F.) *April* 1, 282
      Lynn (Corporal) *April* 6, 637
      Martin (Sir R.) Report *April* 12, 955
  Budget *April* 29, 1284, 1285, 1286, 1287
  Canadian
    Fast Steamship Service *April* 9, 847
    Mail Service *May* 4, 1528
    Tariff *April* 27, 1138
  Cape Colony, Vaal Drifts *April* 12, 957; *May* 3, 1417
  Crewe, Representation of *April* 27, 1140
  Earthquake, West Indies *May* 4, 1531
  Emigrants' Information Office *April* 6, 626
  Gold Coast *April* 12, 943, 944
  Pacific Cable Commission *May* 3, 1412
  Queen's Reign, Colonial Premiers *April* 29, 1235
  Rhodesia, Attorneys *April* 1, 262
  Solomon Islands *April* 30, 1341
  Supply: £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 884
  Swaziland *April* 6, 634
  Transvaal
    Insulting the Queen *April* 6, 621, 622
    Jameson Raid *April* 29, 1239
    Murder of Trooper Black *April* 9, 864, 865
    Uitlanders *April* 27, 1140
    Vaal Drifts *May* 3, 1417
  Tristan da Cunha Island *April* 9, 861
  West
    Africa, Liquor Trade *April* 8, 737
    India Commissioners *May* 6, 1599
    Indies, Earthquake *May* 4, 1531
  Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1440, 1446, 1447, 1457, 1461, 1471

Channing, Mr. F. A., *Northampton, E.*
  Accident to Platelayers, Great Northern Railway *April* 30, 1350
  Business of the House *April* 9, 858
  Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill *April* 5, 562; *April* 8, 831; 2R. *April* 26, 1083; *April* 27, 1137
  Holy Trinity Church School, Gray's Inn Road *May* 3, 1406
  London and North Western Railway, Death of a Fireman *April* 6, 615
  Postal Facilities, Rushden, Northamptonshire *April* 29, 1244
  Sulgrave National School, Northamptonshire *April* 12, 939, 940
  Turco-Greek War *April* 27, 1134

CHAPLIN, Right Hon. HENRY (President of the Local Government Board), *Lincolnshire, Sleaford*
  Agricultural Rating Act *April* 1, 290
  Allotments
    Acts *Mar* 30, 115
    Cornwall *April* 27, 1138
    Devon *April* 6, 624

Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry—*cont.*
  Burial Ground, Debenham, Suffolk *April* 6, 608
  Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Mar* 30, 108
  County Councils, Loans from Officials *April* 8, 739
  Deportation of Paupers *April* 6, 636
  Hampstead Union Workhouse *April* 6, 597
  Local Government Act, 1894 *April* 6, 623
  London
    County Council, Water Supply *Mar* 30, 120
    Water Supply, Royal Commission *Mar* 30, 98, 99; *April* 6, 625; *April* 29, 1230, 1231
  Metropolitan Asylums Board *April* 12, 937
  Oyster Culture *April* 8, 738
  Parish Meeting, Carew, Pembrokeshire *April* 6, 635
  Parochial Rates, Liverpool *April* 6, 607
  Sewage, Coventry *May* 3, 1417
  Swansea Workhouse, Roman Catholic Children *April* 6, 621
  Urban Roads and Footpaths *April* 1, 261
  Vaccination Acts *April* 1, 284
  Watersheds *April* 29, 1229

CHARITY COMMISSION

Parliamentary Charity Commissioner—
Mr. J. Grant Lawson

  Holy Trinity Church School, Gray's Inn Road, Q. Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Grant Lawson *May* 3, 1406
  Wattisfield Town Estate Charity, Suffolk, Q. Mr. D. F. Goddard; *A.* Mr. Grant Lawson *May* 6, 1604

CIVIL SERVICE

  Clerks, Qs. Mr. S. Woods, Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1590
  Customs
    House, Dublin, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 109
    Officers, Q. Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 851
    Preventive Officers and Boatmen, Q. Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1609
  Irish Account, Savings, Qs. Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. J. Clancy; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 294
  Parliamentary Committee, Shorthand Writers, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 923
  Post Office Grievances, Q. Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1226
  Second Division Clerks, Q. Captain Norton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 104

Clancy, Mr. J. J., *Dublin, N.*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1685
  Business of the House, Easter Holidays *April* 1, 300
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 166; *Mar* 31, 189
  Howth Harbour *April* 5, 528
  Irish Account, Saving *April* 1, 294

[*cont.*

CLANCY, Mr. J. J.—*cont.*
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 336, 339, 341, 350
Kingstown Town Commissioners *April* 2, 409
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 330, 333
Tithe Rent-charge, Ireland *April* 5, 528
Train Service, Euston and Holyhead *April* 30, 1347

CLARK, Dr. G. B., *Caithness*
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, In Com. *April* 12, 1060, 1065, 1068
Votes and Grants for Local Purposes *April* 2, 414, 422, 425

CLARKE, Sir EDWARD, *Plymouth*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 129, 139
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 805, 809

CLOUGH, Mr. W. O., *Portsmouth*
Supply: £420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and the Colonies *April* 30, 1391

COGHILL, Mr. D. H., *Stoke-on-Trent*
Turco-Greek War *April* 29, 1242

COHEN, Mr. B. L., *Islington, E.*
Budget *April* 29, 1311
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1099, 1100, 1101
London Water Supply, Royal Commission *April* 29, 1230

COLERIDGE, Lord
Voluntary Schools Bill, In Com. *April* 1, 366

COLLINGS, RIGHT HON. JESSE (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Birmingham, Bordesley*
Felon Convicts *April* 2, 456
Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill, 2R. *May* 3, 1500

COLOMB, Sir JOHN, *Great Yarmouth*
Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 665, 666

COLONIES
Secretary of State—Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN
Under Secretary of State—Earl of SELBORNE
Attorneys, Rhodesia, Q. Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 262

[*cont.*

COLONIES—cont.
British
Columbia, Q. Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1523
South Africa Company
Carrington (Sir F.), Qs. Mr. W. Allan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 281
Lynn (Corporal), Q. Mr. T. Shaw; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 637
Martin (Sir R.), Report, Q. Mr. J. Morley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 955
Canadian
Fast Steamship Service, Q. General Laurie; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 847
Mail Service, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1528
Tariff, Q. Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 27, 1138. *Q.* Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 6, 1599
Cape Colony, Vaal Drifts, Q. Mr. J P. Smith; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 956
Earthquake in West Indies, Q. Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1530
Emigrants' Information Office, Q. Mr. J. F Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 625
Gold Coast, Qs. Mr. D. F. Goddard; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 12, 943
Jameson Raid, Transvaal, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 29, 1239
Mail Service, Canada, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1528
Pacific Cable Commission, Q. Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 3, 1412
Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Colonial Premiers, Q. Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 29, 1235
Rhodesia, Attorneys, Q. Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 262
Solomon Islands, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 30, 1341
South Africa (British) Company (see sub-head *British* above)
Swaziland, Qs. Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 634
Transvaal
Insulting the Queen, Qs. Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Captain Bethell; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 6, 621
Jameson Raid, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 29, 1239
Murder of Trooper Black, Qs. Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 834
Uitlanders, Q. Mr. F. A. Newdigate; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 27, 1140
Vaal Drifts, Q. Mr. E. J. C. Morton; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 3, 1417
Tristan da Cunha Island, Q. Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 861
West
Africa, Liquor Trade, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 8, 737
India Commissioners, Q. Mr. W. F. Lawrence; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 6, 1598
Indies, Earthquake in, Q. Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1530

Colville, Mr. J., *Lanarkshire, N.E.*
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 587

Contracts
Stationery Office, Printing, Q. Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 27, 1136

Conveyancing Bill [H.L.]
l. Pres., Lord Davey; Read 1ª *April* 6, 593

Cooke, Mr. C. W. Radcliffe, *Hereford*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 684

County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland) Bill
c. Withdrawn *April* 27, 1141

County Councillors' Travelling Expenses (Scotland)
On the Order to go into Com. of Supply: Notice of Motion stood in the name of Mr. J. G. Weir; [Mr. Speaker ruled the Question out of Order] *April* 2, 453

Courtney, Right Hon. L. H., *Cornwall, Bodmin*
Budget *April* 29, 1296, 1299, 1300
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 216
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 324, 326
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1215

Cozens-Hardy, Mr. H. H., *Norfolk, N.*
Local Government Act (1894) Amendment (No. 2) Bill, Intro. *April* 28, 1224

Cranborne, Viscount, *Rochester*
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, *April* 5, 563, 564, 575; 2R. *April* 26, 1104; *April* 29, 1249
Supply: £420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and Colonies *April* 30, 1390

Crays Gas Bill
l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

Crete
Action of H.M.'s Government
On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Mr. H. Labouchere, 466, 470; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 470, 471; Mr. T. M. Healy, 471; Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 473; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 474 *April* 2

[*cont.*

Crete—cont.
Policy of H.M.'s Government
Mr. A. J. Balfour, (*Motion for Adj. of House*) 957, 974, 981, 982, 988, 990, 994, 997, 1002, 1005; Sir C. Dilke, 958, 1013; Mr. Curzon, 964, 972, 991, 1020; Sir R. T. Reid, 972; Sir W. Harcourt, 974, 976, 981, 982, 984, 988, 990, 991, 993, 997, 1014; Lord G. Hamilton, 976; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 984; Admiral Field, 993, 1011, 1013, 1014; Mr. P. J. Stanhope, 997; Mr. F. S. Stevenson, 1002, 1006; Mr. H. Labouchere, 1005, 1029, (*Amendt.*) 1029; Mr. C. J. Monk, 1007; Mr. E. J. C. Morton, 1009; Mr. J. Dillon, 1016, 1020; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1020; Mr. T. W. Legh, 1024; Mr. H. J. Gladstone, 1027, 1028; Mr. G. J. Goschen, 1028, 1029; Captain Pirie, 1030; (*Division,* 1030); Mr. T. M. Healy, 1030, 1031; [Mr. Speaker, 1031]; (*Motion Agreed to,* 1032) *April* 12
(For Questions see Foreign Office)

Crilly, Mr. D., *Mayo, N.*
Death of Workhouse Inmate, City of London *May* 6, 1613
Distress, Mayo *April* 2, 476
Irish Mail Service *May* 6, 1603
Post Office Establishments *May* 4, 1527
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 27, 1128

Cripps, Mr. C. A., *Gloucester, Stroud*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1653
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill *April* 5, 559, 560; 2R. *April* 26, 1104

Crombie, Mr. J. W., *Kincardineshire*
General Post Office, London *May* 3, 1415
Mussel Beds *April* 9, 862; *May* 3, 1408
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 312
Turco-Greek War *April* 29, 1241
Weights and Measures Bill *April* 5, 533

CROSS, Viscount (Lord Privy Seal)
Belmullet and Achill, Steam Communication *April* 8, 724
Estate Duty, Pictures and Works of Art *April* 2, 359
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 5, 485
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 45, 77, 78, 79

Crown Lands and Commons (Wales)
Mr. Brynmor Jones, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 6, 596
Mr. J. H. Roberts, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 26, 1069

Crown Lands, etc. (see Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the Crown)

Curran, Mr. T. B., *Donegal, N.*
- Highway Robberies, London *April* 12, 951
- Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 27, 1127

CURZON, Right Hon. GEORGE N. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Lancashire, S.W., Southport*
- Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 434, 435, 437, 447
- Arrest of Mr. Cranstoun *April* 8, 733
- Ashmead-Bartlett (Sir Ellis), Capture of *May* 6, 1616
- Asia Minor
  - Northern Syria and *April* 6, 632, 633
  - Relief Money and Taxation in *April* 30, 1350
- Beam and Otter Trawling *May* 3, 1407
- British Steamer stopped at Syra *April* 29, 1237
- Canadian Tariff *May* 6, 1599
- Cranstoun (Mr.), Arrest of *April* 8, 733
- Crete *Mar* 30, 110, 111, 112, 113; *April* 1, 285, 286, 287, 288; *April* 2, 404, 405, 406; *April* 5, 514, 515, 516; *April* 6, 616, 617, 618; *April* 8, 749; *April* 9, 860; *April* 12, 964, 972, 991, 1020; *April* 27, 1131, 1132, 1133; *April* 29, 1240, 1241; *May* 4, 1524; *May* 6, 1615
- Eghin Massacre *April* 8, 750; *April* 27, 1130
- French Troops in Bahr-el-Ghazel *April* 26, 1075
- Fugitive Slaves at Mombasa *April* 27, 1139
- Greece and the Powers *April* 26, 1077
- Import Duty on Spirits in Africa *April* 9, 862
- Kassala *April* 12, 929
- Madagascar *April* 9, 837
- Massacres
  - Eghin *April* 8, 750; *April* 27, 1130
  - Tokat *April* 12, 947; *April* 27, 1135, 1136; *April* 29, 1242
- Mombasa
  - Fugitive Slaves at *April* 27, 1139
  - Railway *April* 8, 728
- North Sea Fisheries Convention *April* 5, 512; *April* 6, 603; *April* 8, 753
- Relief Money and Taxation in Asia Minor *April* 30, 1350
- Slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba *April* 2, 407
- Tokat Massacre *April* 12, 947; *April* 27, 1135, 1136; *April* 29, 1242
- Turco-Greek War *April* 27, 1133, 1134; *April* 29, 1241; *May* 3, 1417; *May* 4, 1526
- Venezuela *April* 5, 525

CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE
- *Brewing Materials, Q.* Mr. A. M. Brookfield; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 6, 596
- *Channel Passenger-Service, Customs Examination, Qs.* Mr. Ian Malcolm, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1413
- *Custom House, Dublin, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 109. *Q.* Mr. E. H. Carson; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 606

[*cont.*

CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE—cont.
- *Customs*
  - *Examination, Channel Passenger Service, Qs.* Mr. Ian Malcolm, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1413
  - *Officers, Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 851
  - *Preventive Officers and Boatmen, Q.* Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1609
- *Estate Duty*
  - *Late Emperor of Russia, Q.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 30, 117
  - *Pictures, Works of Art, etc., Qs.* Earl Stanhope, Lord Arundell of Wardour; *As.* Viscount Cross *April* 2, 357
- *Income Tax, Scotland, Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 8, 731
- *Land Tax, Qs.* Mr. L. Hardy; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 12, 942
- *Licences*
  - *Grocers, Qs.* Colonel Waring, Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 523
  - *Gun*
    - *Ballybunion (Kerry), Q.* Mr. M. J. Flavin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 107
    - *Roscommon, Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 757
  - *Retail, Ireland, Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 864
- *Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Local Taxation, Ireland, Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 633
- *Midland Railway Company, Q.* Mr. W. G. Mount; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 289
- *Post Office Savings Bank, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Hanbury, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 6, 600
- *Revenue*
  - *Imperial Collection and Expenditure, Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 598
  - *Returns, Ireland, Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 2, 396
- *Stamp Duty, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. E. Barry, Mr. M. Healy; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 277
- *Tithe Rent-charge, Ireland, Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 5, 528

Dalbiac, Colonel P. H., *Camberwell, N.*
- Pirbright Ranges, Volunteers *April* 27, 1130
- Volunteer Camps, Aldershot *Mar* 30, 114

Daly, Mr. James, *Monaghan, S.*
- Deportation of Paupers *April* 1, 283; *April* 2, 407; *April* 5, 522; *April* 6, 636
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 160
- Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 343
- Post Office Establishments *April* 2, 385
- Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 328

Dalziel, Mr. J. H., *Kirkcaldy Burghs*
Crete *April* 2, 473
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1202
Turco-Greek War *May* 4, 1526

Dane, Mr. R. M., *Fermanagh, N.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1691
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1042, 1053
Board of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 716
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 91
Dublin Electric Tramways *April* 2, 403
Irish Mail Service *Mar* 30, 118; *April* 1, 276, *April* 12, 930; *April* 27, 1129
Land Commission, Ireland *April* 12, 926
Loan Fund Societies, Ireland *May* 4, 1516
Local Loans Fund, Ireland *April* 6, 627
Parochial Records, Ireland *April* 5, 520
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *May* 4, 1517
Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 8, 748, 749; *April* 12, 933

Darling, Mr. C. J., *Deptford*
Coopers, Deptford Victualling Yard *April* 8, 755
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 802, 819

Davies, Mr. W. Rees, *Pembrokeshire*
Parish Meeting, Carew, Pembrokeshire *April* 6, 635

Denbigh, Earl of
Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *May* 6, 1589

DEVONSHIRE, Duke of (Lord President of the Council)
Business of the House *April* 2, 383
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 1, 20, 75; *April* 2, 370, 372, 374

Digby, Mr. J. K. Wingfield (see Wingfield-Digby)

Dilke, Right Hon. Sir Charles W., Bart., *Gloucester, Forest of Dean*
Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 425, 435, 437
Albany and King George's Sound Garrison *April* 6, 596
Allotments Acts *Mar* 30, 115
Army Manœuvres *April* 9, 846; *April* 29, 1233
Budget *April* 29, 1292, 1293
Business of the House *April* 8, 836; *April* 9, 858; *April* 27, 1141
Crete *April* 1, 289; *April* 2, 406; *April* 12, 958, 1013; *April* 29, 1241
Election Petitions *April* 5, 538
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill *April* 30, 1351

[*cont.*

Dilke, Right Hon. Sir Charles W.—*cont.*
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 559, 574; *April* 8, 831
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 124
Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 656, 657, 658
Foreign Affairs, Questions *Mar* 30, 123
French Troops in Bahr-el-Ghazel *April* 26, 1074
Fugitive Slaves at Mombasa *April* 27, 1139
Household Cavalry Exercises *May* 3, 1416
Kassala *April* 12, 928
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 502
Local Government Act, 1894 *April* 6, 623
Madagascar *April* 9, 837
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1563, 1567, 1572
Necessitous Board School Districts *April* 8, 759
Poor School Board Districts *April* 8, 760
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1185, 1186, 1202
Solomon Islands *April* 30, 1341
Supply: £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1376
West Africa, Liquor Trade *April* 8, 737
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1427, 1451

Dillon, Mr. John, *Mayo, E.*
Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 444
Agricultural Rating Act, 1896 *May* 6, 1611
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1037, 1051; *May* 6, 1613
Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 713
Business of the House *April* 2, 413
Crete *Mar* 30, 109, 110; *April* 1, 287; *April* 5, 513, 515; *April* 6, 616, 617, 618; *April* 12, 950, 1016, 1020
Gun Licence, Roscommon *April* 8, 757, 758
Land Commission, Ireland *April* 6, 611; *May* 6, 1597
Land Law Ireland Act, 1896, Rules *Mar* 30, 115, 116
Local Taxation, Ireland *April* 6, 633
Retired Soldiers and Sailors, Employment *April* 9, 866
Royal Irish Constabulary *May* 6, 1605
Supply: £132,291 for Survey of United Kingdom *April* 9, 912, 918
Warden Estate, Sneem (Kerry) *May* 4, 1514

Distress in Mayo
On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Mr. D. Crilly, (*Amendt.*) 476; Mr. G. Balfour, 478; Mr. T. M. Healy, 480; Mr. W. Johnston, 480; Mr. J. P. Farrell, 482; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 483; (*Division*, 483). Main Question Agreed to *April* 2

Dixon-Hartland, Sir Frederick D., Bart., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 94
London County Council Water Supply *Mar* 30, 120

DONELAN, Captain A. J. C., *Cork, E.*
Army Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 279; *April* 5, 529, 530
Chelsea Hospital *April* 5, 507
Daunt's Rock Lightship *April* 2, 388
Haulbowline Dockyard *April* 8, 731; *April* 9, 854
Labourers' Cottages, Ireland *April* 8, 746
Land
  Commission, Ireland *April* 2, 391; *April* 6, 609
  Law (Ireland) Acts *April* 5, 525
National School, Six-mile-Bridge, Killarney *April* 8, 747
Naval Expenditure *April* 5, 523
Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 8, 747; *May* 6, 1605
Sailors' Home, Cork *April* 8, 754
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 6, 630

DOUGLAS, Right Hon. A. AKERS- (see AKERS-DOUGLAS)

DRAGE, Mr. GEOFFREY, *Derby*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1454

Dublin Corporation Bill
c. Considered as Amended: Mr. E. H. Carson, (*Amendt.*) 82, 87, 92; Mr. T. M. Healy, 84, 89, 93; Mr. T. Harrington, 85, 91, 93; Mr. J. Lowther, 86, 88; Mr. Serjeant Hemphill, 86, 87; Mr. W. Johnston, 88; Mr. G. Balfour, 88, 89; Mr. M. Healy, 89; Mr. R. M. Dane, 91; Mr. W. Field, 92; Mr. J. C. Rickett, 92; Mr. J. O'Connor, 93; [Mr. Speaker, 93;] (*Division*, 94) *Mar* 30
Read 3° and Passed *April* 2, 384
l. Read 1ª and Referred to Examiners *April* 5, 485

Dumbarton County Buildings Bill
l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

DUNCOMBE, Hon. H. V., *Cumberland, Egremont*
Betting "Places," Hawke *v.* Dunn *April* 29, 1225, 1226
Cavalry Regiments *April* 6, 619, 620
Death from Cat-bite *April* 29, 1246
House of Commons, Divisions *April* 29, 1247
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 348
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 823
Muzzling Dogs *April* 29, 1230
Post Office Grievances *April* 29, 1226
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, In Com. *April* 12, 1061, 1062, 1067

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill
c. Intro., Lord G. Hamilton; Read 1° *April* 1, 303
2R., Mr. J. H. Lewis, 588; Dr. Tanner, 589; Lord G. Hamilton, 589 *April* 5
Read 2° *April* 5, 589

[*cont.*

East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill—cont.
In Com., Reso. for Charge Agreed to *April* 12, 1056
Reso. Rep. and Agreed to *April* 26, 1119
In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *April* 26, 1119
Read 3° and Passed *April* 29, 1336
l. Read 1ª *May* 3, 1405

East India (Officers of General List)
Mr. J. H. Johnstone, (*Notice of Motion*) *Mar* 30, 95
Captain Phillpotts, (*Notice of Motion*) *Mar* 30, 95
Mr. J. H. Johnstone, (*Motion*) 1142, 1158; Sir H. S. King, 1150, 1163; Lord G. Hamilton, 1154, 1158; Sir J. Fergusson, 1161; General Russell, 1162; Sir H. Fowler, 1162, 1164; (*Division*, 1166) *April* 27

Edinburgh American Land Mortgage Company, Limited, Bill
l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Graham Murray, 353, 354; Mr. J. Caldwell, 353 *April* 1
Read 2° *April* 1, 354
In Com., Mr. J. Caldwell, 1500; Mr. Graham Murray, 1500 *May* 3
Rep. without Amendt. *May* 3, 1500
Read 3° and Passed *May* 3, 1500
l. Read 1ª *May* 4, 1513

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Lord President—Duke of DEVONSHIRE
Vice President—Sir JOHN E. GORST
Army Schoolmasters, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1593
Belfast Roman Catholic School, *Q.* Mr. F. B. Mildmay; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 943
Berriew School Bill (see that Title)
Board Schools
  Necessitous Districts, *Qs.* Sir C. Dilke, Mr. E. Gray; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 759
  North Mundham, Sussex, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 260
  Poor Districts, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 760
  Voluntary, and Grants, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 29, 1245
Children's
  Holiday, Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, *Q.* Mr. Gerald Loder; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *May* 4, 1517
  Metropolitan Asylums Board, *Q.* Mr. J. Stuart; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 108. *Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 12, 936
Edinburgh University Library, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1227
Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill (see that Title)

[*cont.*

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—cont.
- *Education*
  - *Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. F. Mandeville; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 400
  - *Rate*, *Q.* Mr. E. Gray; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 760
  - *Results Fees, Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 924
  - *Scotland in*, *Q.* Mr. J. Bryce; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1530
  - *Secondary*, *Q.* Colonel Lockwood; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 282
- *Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill*, *Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley, Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 27, 1137. *Q.* Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 29, 1236. *Q.* Viscount Cranborne; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1249. *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 30, 1351. *Q.* Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *May* 3, 1420
  (For Debates see Title of Bill)
- *Heywood, School Accommodation at*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 949
- *Intermediate Education* (see EDUCATION: INTERMEDIATE AND TECHNICAL)
- *Irish Teachers' Residence Act*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395
- *Model Schools, Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 840
- *Mortmain Acts, Education in Wales*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Lewis; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 1, 296
- *National Schools*
  - *Irish* (see IRELAND)
  - *Sulgrave, Northamptonshire*, *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 939
  - *Teachers, Irish* (see IRELAND)
- *Necessitous Board Schools*
  - *Bill*, *Q.* Mr. A. H. D. Acland; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 6, 631
  - *Districts*, *Qs.* Sir C. Dilke, Mr. E. Gray; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 759
- *North Mundham Board Schools, Sussex*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 260
- *Poor School Board Districts*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 760
- *Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Children's Holiday*, *Q.* Mr. Gerald Loder; A. Sir J. Gorst *May* 4, 1517
- *Roman Catholic*
  - *Children, Swansea Workhouse*, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 620
  - *Schools*
    - *Belfast*, *Q.* Mr. F. B. Mildmay; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 943
    - *Scotland*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 26, 1075
- *School Board for London (Elections) Bill* (see that Title)
- *School Boards*
  - *Elections, Scotland*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 5, 513
  - *Working Balance*, *Q.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 854
- *Schoolmasters, Army*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1593

[*cont.*

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—cont.
- *Schools*
  - *Accommodation*
    - *Heywood*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 949
    - *Voluntary*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844; *April* 30, 1343
  - *Berriew School Bill* (see that Title)
  - *Board*
    - *Necessitous*
      - *Districts*, *Qs.* Sir C. Dilke, Mr. E. Gray; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 759
      - *School Bill*, *Q.* Mr. A. H. D. Acland; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 6, 631
    - *North Mundham, Sussex*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 260
    - *Poor Districts*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 760
  - *Holy Trinity Church, Gray's Inn Road*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Grant Lawson *May* 3, 1406
  - *Inspectors, Scotland*, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 12, 954
  - *Irish National* (see IRELAND)
  - *Model, Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 840
  - *National, Sulgrave, Northamptonshire*, *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 939
  - *Roman Catholic*
    - *Belfast*, *Q.* Mr. F. B. Mildmay; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 943
    - *Scotland*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 26, 1075
  - *Voluntary*
    - *Accommodation*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844; *April* 30, 1343
    - *Applications for Relief*, *Qs.* Mr. E. Bainbridge, Mr. J. C. Williams; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 956
    - *Board, and Grants*, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 29, 1245
  - *Voluntary Schools Act* (see below)
- *Science and Art*
  - *Examinations*, *Q.* Mr. H. Hobhouse; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 936
  - *Grants, Scotland*, *Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1342
- *Scotland*
  - *Roman Catholic Schools*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 26, 1075
  - *Science and Art Grants*, *Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 30, 1342
- *Secondary Education*, *Q.* Colonel Lockwood; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 282
- *Sulgrave National School, Northamptonshire*, *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 939
- *Swansea Workhouse, Roman Catholic Children*, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 620
- *Teachers'*
  - *Irish, Residence Act*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395
  - *Pension Fund, Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1529
- *Technical Education* (see EDUCATION, INTERMEDIATE AND TECHNICAL)

[*co*

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—cont.
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act 1877 (see that Title)
Voluntary Schools (see sub-head *Schools* above)
Voluntary Schools Act, Qs. Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 26, 1073
Voluntary Schools Bill
Associations, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 5, 535
Halsbury, Lord (Personal Explanation) April 6, 595
(For Debates see Title of Bill)
Wales, Education in, Mortmain Acts, Q. Mr. J. H. Lewis; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 1, 296

Education : Intermediate and Technical
Intermediate, Board of, Ireland, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *May* 4, 1529
Technical, Ireland, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 270. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844

Education (Wales)
Mr. J. H. Roberts, (*Notice of Motion*) *May* 4, 1514

Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill
c. In Com., Sir J. Gorst, (*Motion*) 539, 557, 564, 574, 575; Mr. A. H. D. Acland, 546, 552; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 550, 552; Sir H. Fowler, 555, 557, 560; Mr. Grant Lawson, 558; Sir C. Dilke, 559, 574; Mr. C. A. Cripps, 559, 560; Mr. F. A. Channing, 562; Viscount Cranborne, 563, 564, 575; Mr. J. Stuart, 566; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 567; Mr. Sydney Buxton, 568; Mr. E. Gray, 569; Mr. R. McKenna, 570; Mr. T. Lough, 572; Mr. J. C. Williams, 575; Mr. A. Billson, 577; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 578; Sir J. Baker, 580; Mr. J. Brigg, 581; Mr. J. Caldwell, 581 *April* 5
Reso. to be Reported *April* 5, 583
On Report of Reso.: Mr. T. M. Healy, 827; Sir R. Webster, 827; Mr. A. H. D. Acland, 827, 829; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 827, 829; Mr. E. Gray, 829; Sir J. Gorst, 830; Sir C. Dilke, 831; Mr. F. A. Channing, 831; Mr. J. C. Williams, 832 *April* 8
Reso. Agreed to *April* 8, 832
Intro., Sir J. Gorst; Read 1° *April* 8, 832
2R., Mr. T. Lough, 1081, 1100; Mr. F. A. Channing, (*Amendt.*) 1083; Mr. J. H. Roberts, 1087; Sir J. Lubbock, 1090; Sir H. Fowler, 1093, 1101; Mr. B. L. Cohen, 1099, 1100, 1101; Mr. H. Broadhurst, 1102, 1104; Viscount Cranborne, 1104; Mr. C. A. Cripps, 1104; Mr. J. C. Williams, 1108; Sir J. Gorst, 1109; Mr. Sydney Buxton, 1114, 1116; Mr. E. Gray, 1116; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1117; (*Division*, 1118). Main Question Put and Agreed to, 1118 *April* 26
Read 2° and com. *April* 26, 1118
(For Questions see EDUCATION DEPARTMENT)

ELLIS, Mr. J. E., *Notts, Rushcliffe*
Business of the House, Easter Holidays *April* 1, 299

ERNE, Earl of
Irish Mail Service *April* 6, 593

ESMONDE, Sir T. H. GRATTAN, Bart., *Kerry, W.*
Coolgreaney Estate, Ireland *April* 2, 396
Revenue Returns, Ireland *April* 2, 396
Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 387

EVANS, Mr. S. T., *Glamorgan, Mid*
Plumbers' Registration Bill, 2R. *April* 30, 1403
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1486

Extraordinary Tithe Bill
c. Intro., Mr. W. Long; Read 1° *May* 3, 1512

FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 687
Army Medical Department *April* 12, 946; *April* 26, 1072
Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill *April* 12, 946
Habitual Offenders and Adult Reformatories *May* 4, 1539
Plumbers' Registration Bill, 2R. *April* 30, 1403
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 310
Queen's Reign, Crimean Veterans *April* 27, 1128
School Inspectors, Scotland *April* 12, 954
Supply
£23,000 for Houses of Parliament Building *April* 9, 890, 893
£41,107 for Metropolitan Police, Pay and Expenses *April* 30, 1384
£52,277 for Prisons, Scotland *April* 30, 1399
£22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 872
Wallace Bequest *May* 3, 1420

FARRELL, Mr. J. P., *Cavan, W.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1665
Business of the House *April* 8, 836
Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill *April* 9, 842; *May* 4, 1525
Cavan Militia *Mar* 30, 106
Civil Service Clerks *May* 6, 1591
Distress, Mayo *April* 2, 482
Grocers' Licences *April* 5, 524
Insurance of Poor Persons *Mar* 30, 122
Irish
Mail Service *April* 1, 274, 275; *April* 9, 856; *April* 27, 1129; *May* 4, 1525
Teachers' Residence Act *April* 2, 395
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 342, 343
Land Commission
Fair Rent Applications *April* 5, 510, 511
Ireland *April* 2, 389
Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896 *April* 8, 736, 737

[*cont.*

FARRELL, Mr. J. P.—*cont.*
Longford Canal Harbour *May* 6, 1596
National Schools
Ireland *April* 6, 608, 609
Teachers' Pensions, Ireland *April* 5, 533
Patent Office Extension Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 590
Poor Law Union, Ireland *Mar* 30, 106
Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 8, 833
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 332; *April* 5, 591
Quarter Sessions Case, Naas, Kildare *April* 9, 845
Rates, Ireland *May* 6, 1597
Retail Licences, Ireland *April* 9, 864
Technical Education, Ireland *April* 9, 844
Third-class Railway Tickets, Ireland *April* 9, 846
Workmistresses, Irish National Schools *April* 2, 395; *April* 9, 842

Felon Convicts
On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, 454; Mr. Jesse Collings, 456; Sir W. Lawson, 457 *April* 2

FERGUSON, Mr. R. C. M., *Leith Burghs*
Military Training Camp, Scotland *April* 1, 265
Supply: £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 877

FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J., Bart., *Manchester, N.E.*
East India, Officers of General List *April* 27. 1161
Telegraphic Errors *April* 2, 395
Telephone Service *April* 2, 460, 462

FEVERSHAM, Earl of
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 5, 485

FFRENCH, Mr. P., *Wexford, S.*
Land Commission, Ireland *April* 1, 268
Royal Naval Reserve, Wexford *April* 1, 291

FIELD, Admiral, *Sussex, Eastbourne*
Ashmead-Bartlett (Sir Ellis), Capture of *May* 6, 1616
Crete *April* 12, 993, 1011, 1013, 1014
Supply
£159,100 for Public Buildings, Great Britain *April* 9, 869
£126,130 for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain *April* 30, 1393, 1397

FIELD, Mr. W., *Dublin, St. Patrick*
Bimetallism *April* 12, 953
County Court Procedure, Ireland *Mar* 30, 100
Daunt's Rock Lightship *April* 2, 388
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 92
Education, Ireland *April* 2, 400
Gambling in Options and Futures *April* 12, 941

[*cont.*

FIELD, Mr. W.—*cont.*
Kingstown Harbour, Boat Accidents *Mar* 30, 99
Portumna Railway *Mar* 30, 119
Telephone Service, England and Isle of Man *Mar* 30, 118

Financial Relations Between Great Britain and Ireland
Mr. A. J. Balfour, (*Motion*) 124, 126; Sir C. Dilke, 124; Mr. E. Robertson, 125; Mr. J. H. Johnstone, 125; Mr. J. Lowther, 126; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 127; (*Motion Agreed to*, 128) *Mar* 30
Debate Resumed on Amendt. to Mr. Blake's Motion: Sir E. Clarke, 129, 139; Mr. T. M. Healy, 139; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 139; Sir T. Sutherland, 144; Major Jameson, 150; Mr. H. C. Plunkett, 157, 160; [Mr. Speaker, 160;] Mr. J. Daly, 160; Mr. J. C. Bigham, 161; Mr. J. J. Clancy, 166; Colonel Saunderson, 171, 173; Mr. Swift MacNeill, 173; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 177; *Adj. Mar* 30
Debate Resumed: Mr. Arnold-Forster, 185; Mr. T. Lough, 187, 189, 192, 206; Mr. J. J. Clancy, 189; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 192, 218, 241, 242; Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, 197, 206, 212; Mr. T. M. Healy, 206, 241, 242, 245; Mr. J. Morley, 211, 212, 214, 216, 218, 221, 228; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 214; Mr. L. Courtney, 216; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 220; Mr. G. J. Goschen, 227, 228; Mr. Vesey Knox, 228, 240, 241; Mr. J. B. Balfour, 233; Mr. T. P. O'Connor, 234; [Mr. Speaker, 242, 245;] Mr. A. O'Connor, 242; Mr. G. W. Wolff, 242; (*Division*, 242); *Adj. Mar* 31
(For Questions see IRELAND)

Financial Statement 1897–98 (see WAYS AND MEANS)

FINLAY, SIR ROBERT B. (Solicitor General), *Inverness Burghs*
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 775,
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1197

Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. Seton-Karr; Read 1° *May* 4, 1531

FLANNERY, Mr. J. FORTESCUE, *Yorkshire, W.R., Shipley*
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 12, 945
Working Men's Dwellings *April* 2, 410

FLAVIN, Mr. M. J., *Kerry, N.*
Army Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 277, 278
Distress, Listowel Union *April* 5, 534, 535
Gun Licence, Ballybunion (Kerry) *Mar* 30, 107
Money Orders *Mar* 30, 118
Ormathwaite Estate, Listowel *April* 1, 261
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 334
Swansea Workhouse, Roman Catholic Children *April* 6, 620, 621

FLOWER, Mr. E., *Bradford, W.*
County Councils, Loans from Officials *April* 8, 739
Metropolitan Asylums Board *April* 12, 936
Queen's Reign, Household Troops *Mar* 30, 101

FLYNN, Mr. J. C., *Cork, N.*
Land Commission, Fair Rent Applications *April* 5, 509
Postal Arrangements, Charleville (Cork) *April* 8, 759

Food Supplies (United Kingdom)
Mr. H. Seton-Karr, (*Motion*) 642, 657, 658; Mr. R. A. Yerburgh, 652, 657, 672; Sir C. Dilke, 656, 657, 658; Mr. J. Lowther, 661, 666; Mr. G. Lambert, 663, 664; [Mr. Speaker, 664;] Sir J. Colomb, 665, 666; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 667, 672; Mr. W. Allan, 675; (*Motion Agreed to,* 676) *April* 6
(For Questions see NAVY)

FOREIGN OFFICE
Secretary of State—Marquess of SALISBURY
Under Secretary of State—Mr. G. N. CURZON
Africa (European Powers) (see that Title)
Armenia (see that Title)
Arrest of Mr. Cranstoun, Q. Mr. J. A. Willox; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 733
Ashmead-Bartlett (Sir E.), Capture of, Qs. Admiral Field, Mr. J. Caldwell; *As.* Mr. Curzon *May* 6, 1616
Asia Minor (see under Title ARMENIA)
Bahr-el-Ghazel, French Troops in, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 26, 1074
British Steamer Stopped at Syra, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 29, 1237
Canadian Tariff, Q. Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 6, 1599
Cranstoun (Mr.), Arrest of, Q. Mr. J. A. Willox; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 733
Crete
  General, Qs. Mr. J. Dillon, Sir E. Ashmead Bartlett, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. J. H. Roberts, Captain Pirie, Mr. E. H. Carson; *As.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 30, 109. *Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. R. McKenna, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. J. Bryce, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. J. Morley, Sir C. Dilke; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Curzon, Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 284. *Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley, Mr. J. H. Lewis, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 404. *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon, Sir J. Leng, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. H. Lewis, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 5, 513. *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. McLeod; *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 616. *Q.* Mr. F. S. Stevenson; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 749. *Qs.* Mr. Hedderwick, Sir E. T. Gourley; *As.* Mr. Curzon, Sir R. Webster *April* 9, 860. *Qs.* Mr. H. Labouchere, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Mr. A.

[*cont.*

FOREIGN OFFICE—cont.
Crete—General—cont.
  O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1131. *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Roberts, Mr. Hedderwick, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 29, 1239. *Q.* Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 4, 1524. *Qs.* Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Mr. Curzon *May* 6, 1615
  Ministerial Policy, Qs. Sir W. Harcourt; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 5, 516; *April* 6, 639
  Supplementary Estimate, Q. Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 12, 950.
Eghin, Massacre at (see under Title ARMENIA)
European Powers and Africa (see under Title AFRICA AND EUROPEAN POWERS)
Foreign
  Affairs, Questions, Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 30, 122
  Office, Q. Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 2, 409
French Troops in Bahr-el-Ghazel, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 26, 1074
Fugitive Slaves at Mombasa, Q. Sir. C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1139
Greece and the Powers, Qs. Sir W. Harcourt, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. E. J. C. Morton; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Curzon *April* 26, 1075
Import Duty on Spirits in Africa, Q. Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 9, 862
Ivory (Mr. Edward), Case of, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 952
Kassala, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 12, 928
Madagascar, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 9, 837
Massacres at Eghin and *Tokat* (see under Title ARMENIA)
Mombasa
  Fugitive Slaves at, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1139
  Railway, Q. Colonel Williams; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 728
North Sea Fisheries Convention, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 5, 512. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 6, 602. *Q.* Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 753
Prime Minister, Absence Abroad, Qs. Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 298. *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 2, 409
(For Debate see that Title)
Relief Money and Taxation in Asia Minor (see under Title ARMENIA)
Seal Life, North Pacific, Q. Mr. Seton-Karr; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 30, 109
Slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba, Q. Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 2, 406
Slaves, Fugitive, at Mombasa, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1139
Syra, British Steamer Stopped at, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 29, 1237
Tokat, Massacre at (see under Title ARMENIA)

[*cont.*

FOREIGN OFFICE—cont.
Trawling
Beam and Otter, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 3, 1407
Illegal, Moray Firth, *Qs.* General Russell, Sir C. Cameron ; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1231
Turco-Greek War, *Qs.* Mr. J. M. Maclean, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. E. J. C. Morton, Mr. F. A. Channing, Sir E. T. Gourley ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 27, 1133. *Qs.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton, Mr. J. W. Crombie, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. D. H. Coghill ; *As.* Mr. Curzon, Mr. Brodrick *April* 29, 1241. *Q.* Mr. E. J. C. Morton ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 3, 1416. *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Dalziel ; *As.* Mr. Curzon *May* 4, 1526
Venezuela, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 5, 525
Zanzibar and Pemba, Slavery in, *Q.* Mr. T. Bayley ; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 2, 406

FORWOOD, Right Hon. Sir A. B., Bart., *Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk*
Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill, 2R. *May* 3, 1498
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1442

FOSTER, Mr. H. S., *Suffolk, Lowestoft*
Post Office
Dublin *April* 29, 1244
Establishment, Report *April* 29, 1248
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 29, 1235

FOSTER, Sir B. WALTER, *Derby, Ilkeston*
Allotments, Cornwall *April* 27, 1138
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1544, 1547
Plague, Indian Transport *Dilwara* *April* 30, 1346
Supply : £39,000 for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain *April* 9, 903

FOWLER, Right Hon. Sir HENRY H., *Wolverhampton, E.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1671, 1680, 1682
East India, Officers of General List *April* 27, 1162, 1164
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1093, 1101
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 555, 557, 560
Houses of Parliament, Terrace *April* 5, 525
Incorporated Law Society *April* 8, 732
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1203
Supply
£43,177 for Law Officers' Department, Salaries, etc. *April* 30, 1358
£22,300 for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses *April* 30, 1358, 1360
£204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1365

FOX, Dr. J. F., *King's County, Tullamore*
Land Commission, Ireland *April* 2, 392

GALLOWAY, Mr. W. J., *Manchester, S.W.*
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill, 3R. *April* 5, 505

GALWAY, Viscount
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 6, 594

GEDGE, Mr. SYDNEY, *Walsall*
British Museum *April* 6, 637
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, In Com. *April* 12, 1063
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1214
Supply
£5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1373
£204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1367, 1368

GEORGE, Mr. D. LLOYD (see LLOYD-GEORGE)

GIBBS, Hon. ALBAN G. H., *London, City*
Telegraph Wires, City of London *May* 6, 1607

GIBSON-CARMICHAEL, Sir T. D., Bart., *Edinburgh, Midlothian*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 709
Justices of the Peace, Scotland *May* 4, 1520

GILHOOLY, Mr. JAMES, *Cork, W.*
Charge of Burglary, Downpatrick *April* 12, 922
Sale of Estate, Bantry, Cork *April* 12, 923

GLADSTONE, Right Hon. HERBERT J., *Leeds, W.*
Crete *April* 12, 1027, 1028
Supply : £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 888

GODDARD, Mr. D. F., *Ipswich*
Gold Coast *April* 12, 943, 944
Military Hospital, Felixstowe *April* 2, 407 ; *April* 9, 841
Wattisfield Town Estate Charity, Suffolk *May* 6, 1604

GOLDSWORTHY, General WALTER T., *Hammersmith*
Supply : £420,851 for Prisons, England, Wales, and Colonies *April* 30, 1388, 1392

GORDON, Mr J. E., *Elgin and Nairn*
Unclaimed Funds *April* 12, 923

GORST, Right Hon. Sir JOHN E. (Vice President of the Council), *Cambridge University*
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 761, 779
Board of Intermediate Education, Ireland *May* 4, 1529
Business of the House *April* 9, 858
Education Rate *April* 8, 760
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, Intro. *April* 8, 832 ; 2R. *April* 26, 1109 ; *April* 27, 1137 ; *April* 29, 1236 ; *April* 30, 1351
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 539, 557, 564, 574, 575 ; *April* 8, 830
Necessitous Board School Districts *April* 8, 759
Necessitous Board Schools Bill *April* 6, 631
North Mundham Board Schools, Sussex *April* 1, 260
Poor School Board Districts *April* 8, 760
Queen's Reign, Children's Extra Holidays *May* 4, 1517
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1218
School Boards, Working Balance *April* 9, 855
Technical Education *April* 1, 270 ; *April* 9, 845
Voluntary Schools, Accommodation *April* 9, 844 ; *April* 30, 1343
Voluntary Schools Act *April* 26, 1073
Voluntary Schools Bill *April* 5, 535

Goschen, Mr. George J. (Junr.), *Sussex, East Grinstead*
Queen's Reign, Bank Holiday *April* 2, 410

GOSCHEN, Right Hon. GEORGE J. (First Lord of the Admiralty), *St. George's, Hanover Square*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1626, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684
Budget *April* 29, 1323
Channel Fleet *April* 2, 401 ; *April* 5, 512, 513
Crete *April* 12, 1028, 1029
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 227, 228
Food Supplies, United Kingdom *May* 4, 1519
Illegal Trawling, Scottish Waters *April* 27, 1126
Naval
  Expenditure *April* 5, 523
  Guns *April* 12, 948
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 12, 945

Gourley, Colonel Sir E. T., *Sunderland*
Crete *April* 9, 860
Queen's Reign
  Celebration Ceremony *April* 9, 863
  Jubilee Procession *April* 27, 1127
Turco-Greek War *April* 27, 1134

Gray, Mr. Ernest, *West Ham, N.*
Education Rate *April* 8, 760
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1116

[*cont.*

Gray, Mr. Ernest—*cont.*
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 569 ; *April* 8, 829
Necessitous Board School Districts *April* 8, 759

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill
c. 2R., Sir F. Dixon-Hartland *Mar* 30, 94
Read 2° and com. *Mar* 30, 95

Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) Bill [H.L.]
l. 3R., Lord Balfour, 249 ; Viscount Halifax, (*Amendt.*) 251, 256 ; Earl of Camperdown, 254 ; Earl of Morley, 255 ; (*Amendt. negatived*, 257) *April* 1
Read 3ª and Passed *April* 1, 257

Green, Mr. Walford D., *Wednesbury*
Railway Accident, Potter's Lane, Wednesbury *April* 8, 749

Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. A. S. T., *Kent, Tunbridge*
Telephone Service, Tunbridge Wells *Mar* 30, 96

Habitual Offenders and Adult Reformatories
Sir C. Cameron, (*Notice of Motion*) *Mar* 30, 96
Sir C. Cameron, (*Motion*) 1531 ; Dr. Farquharson, 1539 *May* 4

Haldane, Mr. R. B., *Haddington*
Supply
  £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1369, 1372, 1373
  £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1360, 1364
Trawling in Scottish Waters *April* 9, 838
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1444, 1446, 1447

Halifax, Viscount
Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) Bill, 3R. *April* 1, 251, 256

HALSBURY, Lord (Lord Chancellor)
Land Commission *April* 8, 725
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 488
Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *May* 6, 1589
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 58, 59 ; In Com. *April* 2, 361, 362, 363, 366, 367, 368, 371, 375 ; *April* 6, 595

Halsey, Mr. T. F., *Herts, Watford*
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 318, 319

HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord GEORGE F. (Secretary of State for India), *Middlesex, Ealing*

- Accounts Office, India *May* 6, 1596
- Anti-Plague Inoculation, India *April* 1, 263
- British Troops in India, Health *Mar* 30, 96
- Crete *April* 12, 976
- East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill, Intro. *April* 1, 303; 2R. *April* 5, 589
- East India, Officers of General List *April* 27, 1154, 1158
- Indian
  - Civil Service, Judicial Branch *April* 12, 951
  - Famine
    - Relief *April* 12, 932, 933
    - Subscriptions *April* 6, 613
- Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1120
- Queen's Reign
  - Indian
    - Native Infantry *May* 3, 1412
    - Troops *April* 1, 263
- Sanitary Measures, India *April* 8, 752
- Troops in India
  - Beer Supply *April* 2, 399
  - Health of British *Mar* 30, 96

Hammond, Mr. John, *Carlow*

- Land Commission, Ireland *April* 6, 611

HANBURY, Right Hon. R. W. (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), *Preston*

- Agricultural Rating Act, 1896 (Ireland) *May* 6, 1610
- Auxiliary
  - Postmen
    - Ireland *May* 4, 1526
    - Rural *April* 1, 293
    - Sunday Duty *May* 3, 1408
  - Sorting Clerks, Limerick *April* 5, 509
- Belfast Corporation and Londonderry Improvement Bill *April* 12, 925
- Belfast
  - Roman Catholic School *April* 12, 943
  - Telegrams *April* 12, 936
- Betting Messages *May* 4, 1528
- Business of the House (Supply), Irish Board of Works Vote *April* 30, 1352
- Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill *April* 9, 842; *May* 4, 1525
- Channel Passenger Service, Customs Examination *May* 3, 1413, 1414
- Civil Service
  - Clerks *May* 6, 1590, 1591
  - Second Division Clerks *Mar* 30, 105
- Custom House, Dublin *Mar* 30, 109; *April* 6, 606
- Customs
  - Officers *April* 9, 851
  - Preventive Officers and Boatmen *May* 6, 1609
- Education Results Fees, Ireland *April* 12, 924
- Foreign Lotteries *May* 4, 1520
- Gambling in Options and Futures *April* 5, 508; *April* 12, 941, 942
- General Post Office, London *May* 3, 1415

[*cont.*

Hanbury, Right Hon. R. W.—*cont.*

- Howth Harbour *April* 5, 528
- Imperial Revenue, Collection and Expenditure *April* 6, 598
- Irish Mail Service *Mar* 30, 118; *April* 1, 275, 276; *April* 5, 524; *April* 8, 740; *April* 9, 856; *April* 12, 930, 931; *April* 27, 1129; *April* 29, 1238; *May* 3, 1418; *May* 4, 1525; *May* 6, 1603
- Kingstown
  - Harbour, Boat Accidents *Mar* 30, 100
  - Town Commissioners *April* 2, 408, 409
- Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 335, 337, 341, 342, 346, 349, 350
- Land Commission, Ireland *April* 2, 392
- Law Offices *April* 9, 863
- Lighthouses and Fog-horns, Scotland *April* 6, 600
- London and North Western Railway, Death of a Fireman *April* 6, 615
- *Mayflower*, Log of the *April* 27, 1135
- Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, Overcrowding *April* 5, 512; *April* 26, 1070
- Money Orders *Mar* 30, 118
- Parcel
  - Post, Great Britain and Brazil *April* 2, 404
  - Traffic, England and America *Mar* 30, 114
- Parish Councils, Scotland *April* 5, 513
- Parliamentary Committee Shorthand Writers *April* 12, 923
- Passengers for Australia *April* 12, 940
- Postage
  - Embossed Stamps *April* 9, 838
  - Penny *May* 6, 1600, 1601
- Postal
  - Arrangements, Charleville (Cork) *April* 8, 759
  - Charges *April* 12, 944
  - Delivery, Grange, Youghal *May* 3, 1414
  - Facilities
    - Lewis *April* 29, 1243
    - Newtown Cunningham (Donegal) *April* 26, 1073
    - Rushden (Northamptonshire) *April* 29, 1245
  - Orders *May* 6, 1611, 1612
  - Reform *May* 4, 1530
  - Sunday Delivery, Cavan *April* 2, 394
  - Union Convention *April* 8, 738
- Post Cards, Mourning Borders *April* 8, 735
- Postmastership, Monaghan *April* 12, 934; *April* 30, 1348
- Postmen
  - Auxiliary
    - Ireland *May* 4, 1526
    - Rural *April* 1, 293
    - Sunday Duty *May* 3, 1408
  - Bolton *May* 4, 1521
  - Cardiff *April* 29, 1237
  - Nottingham *May* 6, 1594
  - Pontypridd *May* 4, 1523
  - Provincial Towns *April* 29, 1246
- Post Office
  - Answers *April* 2, 408
  - Dublin *April* 29, 1244
  - Establishments *Mar* 30, 97, 98; *April* 1, 280, 281; *April* 2, 385, 386; *April* 5, 530, 531; *April* 6, 604, 605, 606; *April* 9, 850, 851; *April* 30, 1347; *May* 4, 1527
  - Extension, Scotland *May* 3, 1410
  - General, London *May* 3, 1415

[*cont.*

Hanbury, Right Hon. R. W.—*cont.*
  Post Office—*cont.*
    Grievances *April* 29, 1227
    Guide *April* 6, 627
    Hyde *April* 26, 1071
    Savings Bank *April* 6, 600, 602; *May* 3, 1407; *May* 4, 1516
    Servants
      Dismissal *April* 2, 397
      Superannuation *Mar* 30, 113
    Service *April* 30, 1344
    Telephone Exchange *April* 1, 260
    Thurles (Tipperary) *May* 3, 1413
  Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund *April* 6, 626
  Public Departments, Saturday Half-holiday *April* 29, 1234
  Railway Accidents
    Potter's Lane, Wednesbury *April* 8, 749
    Romford Station *April* 8, 734
  Reply Letter Cards *April* 6, 612; *April* 26, 1074
  River Suck Drainage *May* 6, 1601, 1602
  Sample Post *April* 5, 526
  School Accommodation, Heywood *April* 12, 950
  Science and Art, Examinations *April* 12, 936
  Stationery Office Printing Contracts *April* 27, 1136
  Sulgrave National School, Northamptonshire *April* 12, 940
  Sunday Postal Delivery, Cavan *April* 2, 394
  Supply
    £22,300 for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses *April* 30, 1358, 1359
    £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 918
  Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland *May* 4, 1529
  Telegrams, Belfast *April* 12, 936
  Telegraph
    Addresses, Barrow-in-Furness *April* 1, 259
    Errors *April* 2, 395
    Offices
      Applecross (Ross-shire) *April* 8, 730
      Bank Holidays *April* 26, 1074
      Number of *April* 8, 730; *April* 9, 843
    Wires, City of London *May* 6, 1607, 1608
  Telephone Service
    England and Isle of Man *Mar* 30, 119
    General *April* 2, 463
    Glasgow *April* 29, 1236
    Guernsey *April* 9, 850
    Tunbridge Wells *Mar* 30, 97
  Third Class Railway Tickets, Ireland *April* 6, 634; *April* 9, 846
  Train Service, Euston and Holyhead *April* 30, 1347
  Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 6, 629, 630; *April* 8, 756, 757; *April* 9, 857, 858
  Weights and Measures Bill *April* 5, 533
  Workmen's Trains *April* 6, 619
  Workmistresses, Irish National Schools *April* 9, 842

Harcourt, Right Hon. Sir W. Vernon, *Monmouthshire, W.*
  Budget *April* 29, 1255, 1277, 1280, 1285, 1286, 1288, 1292, 1301, 1322, 1335
[*cont.*

Harcourt, Right Hon. Sir W. Vernon—*cont.*
  Business of the House
    Foreign Office Vote *April* 29, 1248
    Non-contentious Measures *April* 9, 859
  Crete *April* 12, 974, 976, 981, 982, 984, 988, 990, 991, 993, 997, 1014
  Crete, Ministerial Policy *April* 5, 516, 517, 518, 520; *April* 6, 639, 640
  Greece and the Powers *April* 26, 1075

Hardy, Mr. H. H. Cozens- (see Cozens-Hardy)

Hardy, Mr. Laurence, *Kent, Ashford*
  Land Tax *April* 12, 942

Harrington, Mr. T., *Dublin, Harbour*
  Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 85, 91, 93

Harrison, Mr. Charles, *Plymouth*
  Incorporated Law Society (Judicial Duties, Expense) *April* 26, 1069
  Supply
    £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1375
    £3,400 for Police Courts, London and Sheerness *April* 30, 1381, 1382
    £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1361

Harwood, Mr. George, *Bolton*
  Postmen, Bolton *May* 4, 1521
  Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1479, 1480

Havelock-Allan, General Sir H. M., Bart., *Durham, S.E.*
  Queen's Reign, Celebration Ceremony *April* 6, 597, 598

Hayne, Right Hon. C. Seale- (see Seale-Hayne)

Hazell, Mr. Walter, *Leicester*
  Enlistment Regulations *April* 9, 842
  Verminous Persons Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 919
  Watersheds *April* 29, 1229

Healy, Mr. Maurice, *Cork City*
  Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 89
  Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 341, 342, 351
  Land Commission, Ireland *April* 1, 268
  Land Law (Ireland) Act, Return of Estates *April* 1, 291
  Post Office Establishments *April* 1, 280
  Sailors' Home, Cork *April* 8, 754
  Stamp Duty, Ireland *April* 1, 277

HEALY, Mr. TIMOTHY M., *Louth, N.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1637, 1643, 1678, 1679, 1693
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1037, 1048, 1049, 1053
Ballinrobe and Lough Mask Canal *April* 5, 532
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 763, 764, 765, 767, 773, 779
Bicycles (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 8, 834
Business of the House
Easter Holidays *April* 1, 299
General *Mar* 30, 183; *April* 9, 859, 919
Carbide of Calcium *April* 1, 296, 297; *April* 2, 409
Crete *April* 2, 471; *April* 5, 515; *April* 12, 1030, 1031
Distress, Mayo *April* 2, 480
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 84, 89, 93
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 8, 827
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 139; *Mar* 31, 206, 241, 242, 245
Gas Poisoning, Alleged *April* 1, 262
Industries (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 182
Irish Account, Savings *April* 1, 294
Judiciary, Ireland *Mar* 30, 119, 120
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 336, 337, 345, 346, 347, 348, 350, 352, 353
Kingstown Town Commissioners *April* 2, 408, 409
Land Commission, Ireland *April* 1, 266; *April* 2, 389, 393; *April* 8, 743, 745
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 817, 824; *April* 12, 957
Light Railways, Ireland *April* 5, 531
Local Loans Fund, Ireland *April* 6, 628
Military Camp, Scotland *April* 2, 402
Model Schools, Ireland *April* 9, 840, 841
National School, Six-mile-Bridge, Killarney *April* 8, 747
Patent Office Extension Bill *April* 12, 1057
Petty Sessions, Belleek, Fermanagh *April* 9, 846
Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 8, 833
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill *April* 1, 334, 335
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, In Com. *April* 12, 1061, 1068
Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 387
Sheriffs, Ireland *April* 8, 742
Statute Law Revision Bills, Ireland *April* 2, 401
Supply: £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 909, 912
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 6, 630; *April* 8, 756, 757; *April* 9, 857, 858

HEATON, Mr. J. HENNIKER, *Canterbury*
Passengers from Australia *April* 12, 940
Postage
Embossed Stamps *April* 9, 837
Penny *May* 6, 1599, 1600, 1601
Postal
Orders *May* 6, 1611, 1612
Reform *May* 4, 1530
Postcards, Mourning Borders *April* 8, 735
Post Office Guide *April* 6, 627
[*cont.*

HEATON, Mr. J. HENNIKER—*cont.*
Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund *April* 6, 626
Telegraph Errors *April* 2, 394
Telephone Service, Guernsey *April* 9, 849
Troops Quartered at Canterbury *April* 5, 506

HEDDERWICK, Mr. THOMAS C. H., *Wick Burghs*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 699
Attorneys, Rhodesia *April* 1, 262
Channel Fleet *April* 2, 401
Crete *Mar* 30, 111; *April* 1, 288; *April* 2, 404; *April* 9, 860; *April* 29, 1240
Illegal Trawling in Scottish Waters *April* 8, 735
Parliamentary Elections, Official Expenses *April* 27, 1125
Trawlers' Licensing Bill, Intro. *April* 6, 642
Tristan da Cunha Island *April* 9, 861

HELDER, Mr. A., *Whitehaven*
Incorporated Law Society, Judicial Duties, Expense *April* 27, 1125

HEMPHILL, Right Hon. Serjeant C. H., *Tyrone, N.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1655
Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 713
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 86, 87
Strabane, Crown Sessions *April* 2, 403

HERMON-HODGE, Mr. R. T., *Oxon, Henley*
Queen's Reign, Commemoration Medal *Mar* 30, 116

HERRIES, Lord
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 65

HERSCHELL, Lord
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 38, 44, 45, 46, 47, 78; In Com. *April* 2, 362, 363, 365, 367, 369, 370, 377

HICKMAN, Sir A., *Wolverhampton, W.*
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1551
Public Health Acts Amendment Bill, Intro. *April* 30, 1402

HICKS BEACH, Sir MICHAEL E., Bart. (see BEACH)

HOARE, Mr. E. BRODIE, *Hampstead*
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1210

HOBHOUSE, Mr. H., *Somerset, E.*
Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 30, 1404
Science and Art Examinations *April* 12, 936

HOGAN, Mr. J. F., *Tipperary, Mid*
Canadian Tariff *April* 27, 1138
Emigrants' Information Office *April* 6, 625
Pacific Cable Commission *May* 3, 1412
Post Office, Thurles (Tipperary) *May* 3, 1412
Queen's Reign
  Colonial
    Premiers *April* 29, 1235
    Visitors *May* 3, 1411

HOLBURN, Mr. J. G., *Lanark, N.W.*
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 324
Queen's Reign, Paupers *April* 1, 265

HOLLAND, Hon. L. R., *Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley*
Canals Protection (London) Bill, Intro. *Mar* 30, 128
Post Office Establishments *Mar* 30, 97

HOME DEPARTMENT

Secretary of State—Sir M. W. RIDLEY
Under Secretary of State—Mr. JESSE COLLINGS

Betting "Places," Hawke v. *Dunn, Qs.* Mr. H. V. Duncombe, Sir J. H. Kennaway; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1225
Bottling Beer, Qs. Mr. R. McKenna; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 26, 1069; *May* 3, 1410
Employers' Liability Act, East Lancashire Paper Mill Company, Q. Colonel Mellor; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 929
Experiments on Living Animals, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1228. *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1603
Gas Poisoning, Alleged, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 1, 262
Habitual Offenders and Adult Reformatories (see that Title)
Highway Robberies, London, Q. Mr. T. B. Curran; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 951
Immigrants, East London, Q. Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1237
Juvenile Prisoners, Q. Mr. J. M. Paulton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 3, 1411
Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1227
Metropolitan Police Boots, Qs. Captain Norton; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 6, 618
Middlesex County Council, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 948
Midland Railway Company, Q. Mr. W. G. Mount; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 289
Newspapers, Folding of, Q. Mr. R. McKenna; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 3, 1410
Nitro-glycerine Factory, Anglesey, Q. Mr. W. T. Howell; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 755
Police, Metropolitan, Boots, Qs. Captain Norton, [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 6, 618

[*cont.*

HOME DEPARTMENT—cont.
Prisons
  Brixton, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 949
  Medical Inspectorship of, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 27, 1137
  Vans, Counties, Q. Mr. J. Hutton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 30, 106
  Warders
    Holidays, Q. Mr. J. A. Willox; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 733
    Superannuation, Q. Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 296
Private Bill Procedure, Q. Mr. D. A. Thomas; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 4, 1518
Privilege Cabs, Q. Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 753
Queen's Reign
  Royal Clemency to Offenders, Q. Mr. J. Lowles; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 4, 1517
  Seats for Middlesex Magistrates, Q. Mr. A. Lafone; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1594
Secondary Education, Q. Colonel Lockwood; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 282
Strike at Norwich, Intimidation, Q. Mr. H. Broadhurst; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1592
Vaccination Acts, Qs. Mr. J. W. Logan; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin, Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 283
Welsh Land Commission, Report, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 752

HOPKINSON, Mr. A., *Wilts, Cricklade*
Supply: £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1374

HOWELL, Mr. W. T., *Denbigh Boroughs*
Nitro-glycerine Factory, Anglesey *April* 8, 755

HOWORTH, Sir H. H., *Salford, S.*
Supply
  £23,000 for Houses of Parliament Building *April* 9, 892
  £22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 871
  £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 876

HUBBARD, Hon. E., *Lambeth, Brixton*
Foreign Lotteries *May* 4, 1520
Post Office Establishments *Mar* 30, 98

HUGHES, Colonel E., *Woolwich*
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1212
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1201

HUMPHREYS-OWEN, Mr. ARTHUR C., *Montgomery*
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 762

HUTTON, Mr. JOHN, *Yorkshire, N.R., Richmond*
Prison Vans, Counties *Mar* 30, 106

Idiots' Institutions (Exemption from Rates) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Tomlinson; Read 1° *April* 7, 720

Importation of Foreign-manufactured Goods
Sir H. Vincent, (*Motion*) 1166, 1180; Captain Chaloner, 1173; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1173; Mr. J. Lowles, 1179; (*Motion negatived*, 1180) *April* 27

Improved Harbour Accommodation (Coasts of Scotland)
Sir W. Wedderburn, (*Notice of Motion*) *May* 4, 1513

Incorporated Law Society (Judicial Duties, Expenses)
Mr. C. Harrison, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 26, 1069
Mr. W. Ambrose, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 26, 1069
Mr. A. Helder, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 27, 1125

INDIA

Secretary of State—Lord G. HAMILTON
Under Secretary of State—Earl of ONSLOW

- *Accounts Office*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *May* 6, 1595
- *Anti-Plague Inoculation*, *Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 1, 263
- *British Troops in, Health of*, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 30, 96. *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 607
- *Civil Service, Judicial Branch*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 12, 950
- *East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill* (see that Title)
- *East India (Officers of General List)* (see that Title)
- *Famine*, *Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 6, 613. *Qs.* Sir H. S. King, Mr. J. Bigwood, Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 12, 931
- *Health of British Troops in*, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Mar* 30, 96. *Q.* Colonel Wyndham Murray; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 607
- *Judicial Branch, Civil Service*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 12, 950
- *Queen's Reign*
  - *Indian*
    - *Native Infantry*, *Q.* Captain Bagot; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *May* 3, 1412
    - *Troops*, *Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 1, 262
- *Sanitary Measures*, *Q.* Captain Pirie; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 8, 751
- *Troops in, Supply of Beer*, *Q.* Mr. C. B. Renshaw; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 2, 399

Industries (Ireland) Bill
c. 2R., Mr. T. M. Healy, 182; Mr. E. H. Carson, 182; Mr. G. Balfour, 182 *Mar* 30
Read 2° and com. to a Select Com. *Mar* 30, 182

Insanity (see LUNACY)

IRELAND

Lord Lieutenant—Earl CADOGAN
Chief Secretary—Mr. G. W. BALFOUR
Lord Chancellor—Lord ASHBOURNE
Attorney General—Mr. J. ATKINSON
Solicitor General—Mr. W. KENNY

- *Achill Island*
  - *Belmullet and, Steam Communication*, *Q.* Earl of Arran; *A.* Viscount Cross *April* 8, 722
  - *Distress*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 928
  - *Relief*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1595
- *Agricultural Rating Act 1896*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. Hanbury, Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1610
- *Agricultural Rating (Ireland)* (see that Title)
- *Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill*, *Qs.* Mr. B. C. Molloy, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1613
  (For Debate see Title of Bill)
- *Antrim, Wallace Estate*, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 935
- *Army Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock*, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Captain Donelan, Colonel Blundell, Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 1, 277. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 529
- *Assizes, Down*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 615
- *Auxiliary*
  - *Postmen*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1526
  - *Sorting Clerks, Limerick*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 509
- *Bailieborough Petty Sessions, Cavan*, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 273
- *Ballinrobe and Lough Mask Canal*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 532
- *Ballybunion (Kerry), Gun Licence*, *Q.* Mr. M. J. Flavin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 107
- *Ballynahinch Petty Sessions*, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 742
- *Bankruptcy Assets*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 12, 938
- *Barbed Wire Fences*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *May* 3, 1414
- *Belfast*
  - *Corporation Bill*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 924
  - *Lunatic Asylum, Death of Inmate*, *Q.* Mr. G. Murnaghan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 102
  - *Roman Catholic School*, *Q.* Mr. F. B. Mildmay; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 943
  - *Telegrams*, *Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 936

[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.

Belmullet and Achill, Steam Communication, Q. Earl of Arran; *A.* Viscount Cross *April* 8, 722
Bicycles (Ireland) Bill (see that Title)
Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill (see that Title)
Brookeborough Petty Sessions, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 30, 1345
Canal
  Ballinrobe and Lough Mask, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 532
  Longford Harbour, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1596
Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill, Qs. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 842; *May* 4, 1525
Carrickfergus, High Sheriff, Q. Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 294
Cavan
  Militia, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 106
  Petty Sessions, Bailieborough, Q. Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 273
  Sunday Postal Delivery, Q. Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 394
Charge of Burglary, Downpatrick, Qs. Colonel Waring, Mr. J. Gilhooly; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 12, 921
Clerkship of Petty Sessions, Q. Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 393
Constabulary, Royal Irish (see subhead *Royal Irish Constabulary* below)
Coolgreaney Estate, Q. Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 396
Cork
  Postal Arrangements, Charleville, Q. Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 759
  Sailors' Home, Qs. Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan, Mr. E. H. Carson; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 754
  Sale of Estate, Bantry, Q. Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 923
County Court
  Procedure, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 100
  Quarter Sessions, and, Drogheda, Q. Mr. R. McGhee; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 511
Custom House, Dublin, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 109. *Q.* Mr. E. H. Carson; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 606
Daunt's Rock Lightship, Qs. Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 2, 388
Deportation of Paupers, Qs. Mr. J. Daly; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 283; *April* 2, 407. *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 5, 522. *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 636
Distress
  Achill Island, Mayo, Q. Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 928
  Employment for the Poor, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 2, 397
  Listowel Union, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 534
  Mayo, in (see Title DISTRESS IN MAYO)
Dockyard, Haulbowline, Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 8, 731. *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 9, 854

[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.

Donegal, Postal Facilities, Newtown Cunningham, Q. Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1072
Down
  Assizes, Q. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 615
  Rifle Range at Tyrella, Q. Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 745
Downpatrick, Charge of Burglary, Qs. Colonel Waring, Mr. J. Gilhooly; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 12, 921
Drainage
  Scheme, Eslin River, Leitrim, Q. Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 291
  River Suck, Qs. Mr. D. Kilbride; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1601
Drogheda County Court and Quarter Sessions, Q. Mr. R. McGhee; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 511
Drunkenness, Arrest for, Omagh, Qs. Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 121
Dublin Corporation Bill (see that Title)
Dublin
  Custom House, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 109. *Q.* Mr. E. H. Carson; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 606
  Electric Tramways, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 2, 403
  Grangegorman Prison, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 938
  Post Office, Q. Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1244
Education
  Board of Intermediate, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *May* 4, 1529
  General, Qs. Mr. W. Field, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. F. Mandeville; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 400
  Results Fees, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 924
  Technical, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 270. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844
Eslin River Drainage Scheme, Q. Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 291
Estates
  Bantry (Cork), Sale of, Q. Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 923
  Coolgreaney, Q. Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 396
  Ormathwaite, Listowel, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 261
  Return of, Land Law (Ireland) Act, Q. Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 291
  Wallace, Antrim, Q. Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 935
  Warden, Sneem (Kerry), Q. Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1514
Fermanagh, Petty Sessions, Belleek, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 846
Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 300. *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 5, 538
  (For Debates see that Title)
Galway Manures, Q. Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1602

[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
Grand Jury, Monaghan, Road Repair, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese ; *A.* Mr G. Balfour *April* 5, 527
Grangegorman Prison, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 938
Grange Postal Delivery, Youghal (Cork), Q. Mr. J. J. Shee ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1414
Grocers' Licences, Qs. Colonel Waring, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 523
Gun Licence
  Ballybunion (Kerry), Q. Mr. M. J. Flavin ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 107
  Roscommon, Qs. Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 757
Harbours
  Howth, Q. Mr. J. J. Clancy ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 528
  Kingstown, Boat Accidents, Q. Mr. W. Field ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury, *Mar* 30, 99
  Longford Canal, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1596
Haulbowline Dockyard, Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 8, 731. *Q.* Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 9, 854
High Sheriff, Carrickfergus, Q. Mr. D. Kilbride ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 294
Horse Breeding, Q. General McCalmont ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 295
Howth Harbour, Q. Mr. J. J. Clancy ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 528
Industries (Ireland) Bill (see that Title)
Irish Accounts, Savings, Qs. Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. J. Clancy ; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 294
Irish Teachers' Residence Act, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395
Judiciary, Qs. Mr. T. M. Healy ; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 30, 119
Jurors, Tyrone, Q. Mr. G. Murnaghan ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1608
Kerry
  Ballybunion, Gun Licence, Q. Mr. M. J. Flavin ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 107
  Warden Estate, Sneem, Q. Mr. J. Dillon ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1514
Kildare, Quarter Sessions Case, Naas, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 845
Killarney, National School, Six-mile-Bridge, Qs. Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 747
Kingstown
  Harbour
    Boat Accidents, Q. Mr. W. Field ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 99
    Roads Transfer Bill, Q. Mr. H. C. Plunkett ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 952
    (For Debate see Title of Bill)
  Town Commissioners, Qs. Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. J. Clancy ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 408
Labourers' Cottages, Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 746. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 941
Labourers' (Ireland) Acts, Qs. Mr. J. J. Shee, Mr. P. O'Brien ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 271. *Q.* Mr. J. J. Shee ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 398
[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
Land Commission
  Miscellaneous, Qs. Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. Tully, Mr. Vesey Knox ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 103. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. R. McGhee, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. P. Ffrench, Mr. M. Healy ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 266. *Qs.* Viscount Templeton, Earl of Arran ; *As.* Earl of Ranfurly *April* 2, 379. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. J. J. Shee, Mr. M. McCartan, Captain Donelan, Dr. J. F. Fox, Mr. G. Murnaghan ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 389. *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 509. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. Hammond, Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 609. *Qs.* Lord Castletown ; *As.* Lord Halsbury *April* 8, 724. *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan, Colonel Waring, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. T. M. Healy ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 8, 742. *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 852. *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. John Roche ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 925. *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 29, 1233. *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1597
  Rules, Q. Duke of Abercorn ; *A.* Earl of Ranfurly *April* 1, 257
Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896
  Re-instatement, Qs. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 736
  Return of Estates, Q. Mr. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 291
  Returns, Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 525
  Rules, Qs. Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Mar* 30, 115
Land Purchase, Qs. Mr. J. J. Shee ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 269
Leitrim, Eslin River Drainage Scheme, Q. Mr. J. Tully ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 291
Licences
  Grocers', Qs. Colonel Waring, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *As.* Mr. G, Balfour *April* 5, 523
  Gun
    Ballybunion (Kerry), Q. Mr. M. J. Flavin ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 107
    Roscommon, Qs. Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 757
  Retail, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 864
Light Railways (see Title RAILWAYS.)
Limerick, Auxiliary Sorting Clerks, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 509
Listowel
  Ormathwaite Estate, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 261
  Union, Distress, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 534
Loan Fund Societies, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1516
Loans, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee ; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 5, 536
[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
Local
Loans Fund, *Qs.* Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson, *April* 6, 627
Taxation, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson, *April* 6, 633
Londonderry Improvement Bill, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 924
Longford Canal Harbour, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1596
Lunacy, *Belfast Asylum*, *Death of Inmate*, *Q.* Mr. G. Murnaghan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar.* 30, 102
Lunatic Asylums, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour, *April* 2, 399
Mail Service, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar.* 30, 118. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 274. *Qs.* Mr. M. Austin, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 524. *Q.* Earl of Erne; *A.* Duke of Norfolk *April* 6, 593. *Q.* Mr. W. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 740. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 856. *Qs.* Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. H. C. Plunkett; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 930. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 27, 1129. *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1238. *Qs.* Dr. Tanner; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1418. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1525. *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. D. Crilly; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1602
Manures, *Galway and Mayo*, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1602
Mayo
Achill Island (see subhead *Achill Island* above)
Distress in (see Title DISTRESS IN MAYO)
Manures, *Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1602
Westport and Castlebar Unions, *Outdoor Relief*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 507
Militia
Cavan, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 106
Training, *Queen's County*, *Q.* Dr. McDonnell; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 12, 948
Mitchelstown Union, *Election of Guardians*, *Q.* Mr. W. Abraham (Cork); *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 273
Model Schools, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 840
Monaghan
Grand Jury, *Road Repair*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 527
Postmastership, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 934; *April* 30, 1348
Union
Appeal Valuers, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1527
Workhouse, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 527
Mullingar
Petty Sessions, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 636
Union, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 614
[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
National Schools
Six-mile-Bridge, *Killarney*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 747
Teachers Pensions, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 533
Workmistresses, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 608. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 842
Omagh, *Arrest for Drunkenness*, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 121
Ormathwaite Estate, *Listowel*, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 261
Outdoor Relief, *Westport and Castlebar Unions*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 507
Parochial Records, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 520
Paupers, *Deportation of*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 283; *April* 2, 407. *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 5, 522. *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 636
Petty Sessions
Bailieborough, *Cavan*, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 273
Ballynahinch, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 742
Belleek, *Fermanagh*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 846
Brookeborough, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 30, 1345
Clerkship of, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 393
Mullingar, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 636
Poor Law Amalgamation Bill (Ireland), *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 535
Poor Law Union, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 106
Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill (see that Title)
Portumna Railway, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 119
Postal
Arrangements, *Charleville (Cork)*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 759
Delivery, *Grange*, *Youghal*, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1414
Facilities, *Newtown Cunningham (Donegal)*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1072
Postmastership, *Monaghan*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 934; *April* 30, 1348
Postmen, *Auxiliary*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1526
Post Office
Dublin, *Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1244
Thurles (Tipperary), *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1412
Prisons
Grangegorman, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 938
Tullamore, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 120
[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
Protestant Jurors, Q. Mr. E. Barry ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 274
Quarter Sessions
Case, Naas, Kildare, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 845
County Court, and, Drogheda, Q. Mr. R. McGhee ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 511
Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill (see that Title)
Queen's
County, Militia Training, Q. Dr. McDonnell ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 12, 948
Reign, Diamond Jubilee
Clemency of the Crown, Q. Mr. J. Tully ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 533
Royal Irish Constabulary, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1517
Railways
Light (see under Title Railways)
Portumna, Q. Mr. W. Field ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 119
System of, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 297
Third-class Tickets, Q. Mr. M. Austin ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 634. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 846
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore, Qs. Mr. J. Redmond, Colonel Waring, Mr. A. O'Connor, Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy ; [Mr. Speaker] ; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 628. *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. D. P. Barton ; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 756. *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy ; [Mr. Speaker] ; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 856
Rates, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1597
Retail Licences, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 864
Revenue Returns, Q. Sir T. G. Esmonde ; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 2, 396
Rifle Range, Tyrella (Down), Q. Mr. M. McCartan ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 745
River Suck Drainage, Qs. Mr. D. Kilbride ; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1601
Roscommon, Gun Licence, Qs. Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 757
Royal Irish Constabulary
Barracks, Tullaghan, Qs. Captain Donelan, Mr. R. M. Dane ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 747
Pensions, Qs. Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir T. G. Esmonde, Mr. J. Tully ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 2, 386
Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1517
Railway Stations, at, Qs. Captain Donelan, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. Vesey Knox ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1605
Secret Societies, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 933
Royal Naval Reserve, Wexford, Q. Mr. P. Ffrench ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 1, 291
Sailors' Home, Cork, Qs. Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan, Mr. E. H. Carson ; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 754
Sale of Estate, Bantry (Cork), Q. Mr. J. Gilhooly ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 923

[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (see that Title)
Schools
Model, Qs. Mr. T. M. Healy ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 840
National
Six-mile-Bridge, Killarney, Qs. Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 747
Teachers' Pensions, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 533
Workmistresses, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 608. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 842
Roman Catholic, Belfast, Q. Mr. F. B. Mildmay ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 943
Sheriffs, Qs. Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. T. M. Healy ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 8, 740
Stamp Duty, Qs. Mr. E. Barry, Mr. M. Healy ; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 277
Statute Law Revision Bills, Ireland, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 401
Strabane Crown Sessions, Q. Mr. Serjeant Hemphill ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 403
Suck Drainage, Qs. Mr. D. Kilbride ; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1601
Sunday Postal Delivery, Cavan, Q. Mr. S. Young ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 394
Teachers'
Pension Fund, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1529
Pensions, National School, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 553
Residence Act, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395
Technical Education, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee ; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 270. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844
Telegrams, Belfast, Q. Mr. G. W. Wolff ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 936
Third-class Railway Tickets, Q. Mr. M. Austin ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 634. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 846
Tipperary, Thurles Post Office, Q. Mr. J. F. Hogan ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1412
Tithe Rent-charge, Q. Mr. J. J. Clancy ; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 5, 528
Tramways, Electric, Dublin, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 2, 403
Tullamore Gaol, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 120
Tyrone
Jurors, Q. Mr. G. Murnaghan ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1608
Omagh, Arrest for Drunkenness, Qs. Mr. P. O'Brien ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 121
Strabane, Crown Sessions, Q. Mr. Serjeant Hemphill ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 403
Union, Listowel, Distress, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin ; [Mr. Speaker] ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5 534

[*cont.*

IRELAND—cont.
Unions
Mitchelstown, Election of Guardians, Q. Mr. W. Abraham (Cork); *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 273
Monaghan, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1527
Mullingar, Q. Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 614
Poor Law, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 106
Westport and Castlebar, Outdoor Relief, Q. Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 507
Workhouse, Monaghan, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 527
Wallace Estate, Antrim, Q. Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 935
Warden Estate, Sneem (Kerry), Q. Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1514
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway (see subhead *Railways* above)
Westport and Castlebar Unions, Outdoor Relief, Q. Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 507
Wexford Royal Naval Reserve, Q. Mr. P. Ffrench; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 1, 291
Workhouse, Monaghan Union, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 527
Workmistresses Irish National Schools, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 395. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 608. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 842
Youghal, Postal Delivery, Grange, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1414

JAMESON, Major J. EUSTACE, *Clare, W.*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 150
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 349
Light Railways, Ireland *April* 9, 848
Supply: £132,291 for Survey of United Kingdom *April* 9, 915

JEFFREYS, Mr. A. F., *Hants, Basingstoke*
Married Soldiers, Medical Attendance *April* 9, 838

JESSEL, Captain H. M., *St Pancras, S.*
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1196

JOHNSTON, Mr. WILLIAM, *Belfast, S.*
Distress, Mayo *April* 2, 480
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 88

JOHNSTONE, Mr. J. HEYWOOD, *Sussex, Horsham*
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 775
East India, Officers of General List *Mar* 30, 95; *April* 27, 1142, 1158
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 125

JOICEY, Sir JAMES, Bart., *Durham Chester-le-Street*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 684, 685
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1556, 1558, 1561

JONES, Mr. DAVID BRYNMOR, *Swansea District*
Berriew School Bill, 2R., *April* 8, 768, 771
Crown Lands and Commons, Wales *April* 6, 596
Supply: £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1379, 1380

JONES, Mr. L. ATHERLEY (see ATHERLEY-JONES

Jurors' Expenses Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Lloyd Morgan; Read 1° *May* 4 1531

Kassala (see FOREIGN OFFICE)

KEARLEY, Mr. H. E., *Devonport*
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1041, 1042
Aldershot Manœuvres, Royal Marines *April* 6 604
Post Office Establishments *April* 6, 604
Royal Patriotic Commission *May* 6, 1615
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1489

KENNAWAY, Right Hon, Sir John H., Bart., *Devonshire, Honiton*
Betting "Places," Hawke *v.* Dunn *April* 29, 1225

KENYON-SLANEY, Colonel W., *Shropshire, Newport*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 697

KILBRIDE, Mr. D., *Galway, N.*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 690, 691
High Sheriff, Carrickfergus *April* 1, 294
Manures, Galway and Mayo *May* 6, 1602
River Suck Drainage *May* 6, 1601, 1602

KIMBERLEY, Earl of
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 72, 75, 79; In Com. *April* 2, 365, 366, 368, 371, 372, 374, 376, 377

KING, Sir H. SEYMOUR, *Hull, Central*
East India, Officers of General List *April* 27, 1150, 1163
Indian Famine, Relief *April* 12, 931

Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Hanbury, 335, 337, 341, 342, 346; Mr. J. J. Clancy, 336, 339, 341: Mr. T. M. Healy, 336, 337, 345, 346; [Mr. Speaker, 336, 337, 343, 345, 346;] Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 341; Mr. M. Healy 341, (*Amendt.*) 342; Mr. J. P. Farrell, 342, 343; Mr. J. Daly, 343; Mr. P. O'Brien, 345; (*Division,* 345;) Sir M. Hicks Beach, 346; (*Divisions,* 346) *April* 1
  Read 2° *April* 1, 346
  Mr. Hanbury, (*Motion to com. to Select Com.*) 346, 349, 350; Mr. T. M. Healy, (*Amendt.*) 347, 348, 350, 352, 353; [Mr. Speaker, 347, 349, 350, 352, 353;] Mr. H. V. Duncombe, 348; Major Jameson,349; Mr. J. J. Clancy, 350; Mr. M. Healy, 351; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 351, (*Motion*) 353; Colonel Lockwood, 352; (*Adj. Agreed to,* 353) *April* 1
  Withdrawn *April* 1, 353
  (For Questions see IRELAND)

KNOWLES, Mr. LEES, *Salford, W.*
  Plumbers' Registration Bill, 2R. *April* 30, 1402

KNOX, Mr. E. F. VESEY, *Londonderry City*
  Agricultural Rating Act, 1896 *May* 6, 1610
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1618, 1620, 1626, 1627, 1634, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1681
  Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1038, 1054
  Appeal in Certain Civil Matters (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 29, 1337
  Bankruptcy Assets, Ireland *April* 12, 938
  Belfast Corporation and Londonderry Improvement Bills *April* 12, 924
  Board of Intermediate Education, Ireland *May* 4, 1529
  Budget *April* 28, 1224; *April* 29, 1328
  Business of the House *Mar* 30, 182
  Canadian Mail Service *May* 4, 1528
  Education Results Fees, Ireland *April* 12, 924
  Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1117
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 228, 240, 241
  Grangegorman Prison *April* 12, 938
  Land Commission
    Culmore *Mar* 30, 104
    Ireland *April* 12, 925
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 801, 802, 809, 818
  Parliamentary Committee, Shorthand Writers *April* 12, 923
  Post Office Establishments *April* 9, 851
  Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 335
  Roman Catholic Schools, Scotland *April* 26, 1075
  Royal Irish Constabulary *May* 6, 1605
  Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1199, 1202; In Com. *May* 3, 1510, 1511
  Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland *May* 4, 1529

KNUTSFORD, Viscount
  Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 486

LABOUCHERE, Mr. HENRY, *Northampton*
  Crete *April* 2, 446, 470; *April* 12, 1005, 1029; *April* 27, 1131
  Crewe, Representation of *April* 27, 1139, 1140
  Estate Duty, Late Emperor of Russia *Mar* 30, 117
  Supply: £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 891

LABOUR QUESTIONS, ETC.
  Bottling Beer, Q. Mr. R. McKenna; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 26, 1069; *May* 3, 1410
  Civil Service Clerks, Qs. Mr. S. Woods, Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1590
  Coopers
    Deptford Victualling Yard, Q. Mr. C. J. Darling; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 755
    Navy, Bull Point, Devonport, Q. Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 5, 536
  Employers' Liability
    Act, East Lancashire Paper Mills Company, Q. Colonel Mellor; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 929
    Bill, Q. Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1249
  Haulbowline Dockyard, Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 8, 731
  Labourers' Cottages, Ireland, Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 746. Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 941
  Labourers (Ireland) Acts, Qs. Mr. J. J. Shee, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 271. Q. Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 398
  Mines (Eight Hours) Bill (see that Title)
  Newspaper Folding, Q. Mr. R. McKenna; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 3, 1410
  Plumbers' Registration Bill (see that Title)
  Postmen
    Auxiliary
      Ireland, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1526
      Rural, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 293
      Sunday Duty, Q. Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1408
    Bolton, Q. Mr. G. Harwood; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1521
    Cardiff, Q. Mr. J. M. Maclean; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1237
    Nottingham, Q. Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1593
    Pontypridd, Q, Mr. Alfred Thomas; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1523
    Rural Auxiliary, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 293
  Post Office Servants
    Dismissal, Q. Viscount Valentia; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 397
    Superannuation, Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 113
  Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Pay of Government Employés, Q. Captain Norton; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 945
  Retired Soldiers and Sailors, Employment, Qs. Mr. A. M. Brookfield, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 9, 865

[*cont*

LABOUR QUESTIONS, ETC.—cont.
- *Strike at Norwich, Intimidation, Q.* Mr. H. Broadhurst; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1592
- *Working Men's Dwellings, Qs.* Mr. J. F. Flannery, Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 410
- *Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Workmen's Trains, Q.* Captain Norton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 619

LAFONE, Mr. A., *Southwark, Bermondsey*
- Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *May* 6, 1594

LAMBERT, Mr. G., *Devon, South Molton*
- Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 682, 711
- Auxiliary Postmen, Sunday Duty *May* 3, 1408
- Crete *May* 4, 1524
- Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill *May* 3, 1420
- Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 663, 664
- Supply: £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1369, 1370, 1373

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill
- *c.* Considered as Amended: Sir C. Dilke, (*Amendt.*) 502; Mr. W. J. Galloway, 505; (*Amendt. Agreed to,* 505) *April* 5

Land Transfer Bill
- *l.* Rep. from Standing Com. with Amendts. *May* 4, 1513

LANSDOWNE, MARQUESS OF (Secretary of State for War)
- Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 379
- Military Works Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 488
- Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 6, 595

LAURIE, General J. W., *Pembroke and Haverfordwest*
- Canadian Fast Steamship Service *April* 9, 847
- Niger Campaign *April* 6, 623
- Queen's Reign, Celebration Ceremony *April* 6 598
- Supply: £16,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings *April* 9, 908
- Vaccination, Royal Commission *April* 30, 1341

LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE
- *Arrest*
  - *Cranstoun (Mr.), of, Q.* Mr. J. A. Willox; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 733
  - *Drunkenness, for, Omagh, Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 121
- *Assizes, Down, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 615

[*cont.*

LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE—cont.
- *Attorneys, Rhodesia, Q.* Mr. Hedderwick; *A* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 1, 262
- *Bankruptcy Assets, Ireland, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 12, 938
- *Barbed Wire Fences, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *May* 3, 1414
- *Brixton Prison, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 949
- *Brookeborough Petty Sessions, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 30, 1345
- *Burglary, Charge of, Downpatrick, Qs.* Colonel Waring, Mr. J. Gilhooly; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 12, 921
- *Carbide of Calcium, Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Sir R. Webster *April* 1, 296; *April* 2, 409
- *Constabulary*
  - *Royal Irish* (see *Royal Irish Constabulary* below)
  - *Scotland, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1515
- *County Court*
  - *Procedure, Ireland, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 100
  - *Quarter Sessions, and, Drogheda, Q.* Mr. R. McGhee; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 511
- *Crown Sessions, Strabane, Q.* Mr. Serjeant Hemphill; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 403
- *Education*
  - *Rate, Q.* Mr. E. Gray; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 760
  - *Wales, in, Mortmain Acts, Q.* Mr. J. H. Lewis; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 1, 296
- *Election Petitions, Qs.* Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 5, 538
- *Fatal Accidents, Inquiry (Scotland) Act, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 6, 599
- *Felon Convicts* (see that Title)
- *Grand Jury, Monaghan, Road Repair, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 527
- *Grangegorman Prison. Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 938
- *High Court of Justice, Witness Cases, Q.* Mr. R. A. Allison; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 5, 537
- *High Sheriff, Carrickfergus, Q.* Mr. D. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 294
- *Highway Robberies, London, Q.* Mr. T. B. Curran; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 951
- *Illegal Trawling*
  - *Danish Waters, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1523
  - *Lewis, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1070
  - *Moray Firth, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April.* 26, 1077. *Qs.* General Russell, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1231. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1349
  - *Scottish Waters, Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. Hedderwick; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray; [Mr. Speaker;] *April* 8, 735. *Qs.* Mr. R. B. Haldane, Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 838. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. J. G. Goschen *April* 27, 1126

[*cont.*

LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE—cont.
  Incorporated Law Society, *Qs.* Mr. J. L. Wanklyn, Sir H. Fowler, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 8, 732
  Indian Civil Service, Judicial Branch, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 12, 950
  Insurance of Poor Persons, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Mar* 30, 122
  Ivory (Mr. Edward), Case of, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 952
  Judiciary, Ireland, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 30, 119
  Jurors
    Protestant, Ireland, *Q.* Mr. E. Barry; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 274
    Tyrone, *Q.* Mr. G. Murnaghan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1608
  Justices of the Peace, Scotland, *Q.* Sir T. D. Gibson-Carmichael; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1520
  Land Commission
    Miscellaneous, *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan. Mr. J. Tully, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 103. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. R. McGhee, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. P. Ffrench, Mr. M. Healy; [Mr. Speaker]; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 1, 266. *Qs.* Viscount Templetown, Earl of Arran; *As.* Earl of Ranfurly *April* 2, 379. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. J. J. Shee, Mr. M. McCartan, Captain Donelan, Dr. J. F. Fox, Mr. G. Murnaghan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 389. *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 509. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. J. Hammond, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 609. *Qs.* Lord Castletown; *As.* Lord Halsbury *April* 8, 724. *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan, Colonel Waring, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 8, 742. *Qs.* Mr. M. McCartan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 852. *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox, Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. John Roche; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 925. *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 29, 1233. *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1597
    Rules, *Q.* Duke of Abercorn; *A.* Earl of Ranfurly *April* 1, 257
  Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896
    Re-instatement, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 736
    Return of Estates, *Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *Q.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 291
    Returns, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 525
    Rules, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Mar* 30, 115
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 957
  (For Debate see Title of Bill)

[*cont.*

LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE—cont.
  Law Offices, Superannuation, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Tritton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 862
  Local
    Bye-laws, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 12, 951
    Loans Fund, Ireland, *Qs.* Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 627
  Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill (see that Title)
  Metropolitan Police Boots, *Qs.* Captain Norton; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 6, 618
  Metropolitan Police Courts and the Jubilee Bill (see that Title)
  Middlesex County Council, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 948
  Parochial Records, Ireland, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 520
  Petty Sessions
    Bailieborough, Cavan, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* J. Atkinson *April* 1, 273
    Ballynahinch, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 742
    Belleek, Fermanagh, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 846
    Brookeborough, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 30, 1345
    Ireland, Clerkship of, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 393
    Mullingar, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 636
  Police in Scotch Counties, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 729
  Police, Metropolitan (see *Metropolitan Police* above)
  Prisoners, Juvenile, *Q.* Mr. J. M. Paulton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 3, 1411
  Prisons
    Brixton, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 949
    Grangegorman, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 938
    Medical Inspectorship of, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 27, 1137
    Tullamore, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 120
    Vans, Counties, *Q.* Mr. J. Hutton; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Mar* 30, 106
    Warders
      Holidays, *Q.* Mr. J. A. Willox; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 733
      Superannuation, *Q.* Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 296
  Quarter Sessions
    Case, Naas, Kildare, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 845
    County Court and, Drogheda, *Q.* Mr. R. McGhee; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 511
  Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill (see that Title)
  Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee (see that Title)
  Royal Irish Constabulary
    Barracks, Tullaghan, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 747

[*cont.*

LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE—cont.
  Royal Irish Constabulary—cont.
    Pensions, Qs. Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir T. G. Esmonde, Mr. J. Tully; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 2, 386
    Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1517
    Secret Societies, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 12, 933
  Sessions
    Crown, Strabane, Q. Mr. Serjeant Hemphill; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 403
    Petty
      Bailieborough, Cavan, Q. Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 1, 273
      Ballynahinch, Q. Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 8, 742
      Belleek, Fermanagh, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 846
      Brookeborough, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 30, 1345
      Clerkship of, Ireland, Q. Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 393
      Mullingar, Q. Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 6, 636
    Quarter
      Case, Naas, Kildare, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 845
      County Court and, Drogheda, Q. Mr. R. McGhee; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 5, 511
  Sheriffs, Ireland, Qs. Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *April* 8, 740
  Statute Law Revision Bills, Ireland, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 401
  Strabane Crown Sessions, Q. Mr. Serjeant Hemphill; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 403
  Strike at Norwich, Intimidation, Q. Mr. H. Broadhurst; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1592
  Trawling
    Beam and Otter, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 3, 1407
    Illegal (see subhead *Illegal Trawling* above)
  Tullamore Gaol, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 120
  Welsh Land Commission, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 752

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill
c. 2R., Sir R. Webster, 780, 802; Mr. Lloyd Morgan (*Amendt.*), 785; Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, 788; Mr. E. H. Carson, 792, 819; Mr. T. T. Bucknill, 799; Mr. Vesey Knox, 801, 802, 809, 818; Mr. A. K. Loyd, 802; Mr. C. J. Darling, 802, 819; Sir E. Clarke, 805, 809; Mr. A. Lyttelton, 805; Mr. J. L. Walton, 812; Mr. Graham Murray, 815; Sir F. Lockwood, 816, 817, 818, 819; Mr. T. M. Healy, 817, 824; Mr. Atherley-Jones, 821; Mr. J. L. Wharton, 823; Mr. H. V. Duncombe, 823; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 826; (*Divisions*, 826) *April* 8
  Read 2° and com. *April* 8, 826
  (For Questions see LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE

LAWRENCE, Mr. EDWIN, *Cornwall, Truro*
  Piers and Harbours *April* 27, 1180
  Telephone Service *April* 2, 463

LAWRENCE, Mr. WILLIAM F., *Liverpool, Abercromby*
  West India Commissioners *May* 6, 1598

LAWSON, MR. J. GRANT (Parliamentary Charity Commissioner), *York, N.R., Thirsk and Malton*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1646
  Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 558
  Holy Trinity Church School, Gray's Inn Road *May* 3, 1406
  Wattisfield Town Estate Charity, Suffolk *May* 6, 1604

LAWSON, Sir WILFRID, Bart., *Cumberland, Cockermouth*
  Felon Convicts *April* 2, 457
  House of Commons, Sale of Intoxicants *April* 9, 837
  Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 920
  Supply: £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 898

LECKY, Mr. W. E. HARTPOLE, *Dublin University*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1666
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 197, 206, 212

LEES, Sir ELLIOTT, Bart., *Birkenhead*
  Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 689
  Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1549, 1567

LEGH, Hon. T. WODEHOUSE, *Lancashire, S.W., Newton*
  Crete *April* 12, 1024
  Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1575, 1576, 1577
  Supply: £22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 870

LENG, Sir JOHN, *Dundee*
  Crete *April* 5, 514
  Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act *April* 6, 599
  Lighthouses and Foghorns (Scotland) *April* 6, 599
  Supply: £25,000 for Admiralty Buildings (Extension of) *April* 9, 900
  Votes and Grants for Local Purposes *April* 2, 418, 423

LEUTY, Mr. T. R., *Leeds, E.*
  Local Officers' Superannuation Bill *April* 6, 633

LEWIS, Mr. J. HERBERT, *Flint Boroughs*
- Asia Minor and Northern Syria *April* 6, 633
- Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 762, 763, 779
- Business of the House *April* 9, 919
- Crete *April* 2, 404; *April* 5, 515
- East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 588
- Education in Wales, Mortmain Acts *April* 1, 296
- Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 578
- Light Dues on Shipping *April* 1, 292, 293
- Prime Minister, Absence Abroad *April* 1, 303
- Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 327
- Supply
  - £25,000 for Admiralty Buildings (Extension of) *April* 9, 900
  - £16,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings *April* 9, 909
  - £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 894, 899
  - £39,000 for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 902
  - £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 887
- Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment Bill, Intro. *April* 6, 642

Licences (Ireland) Bill

c. Withdrawn *April* 28, 1222

Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill

c. 2R., Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 920; Lord Stanley, 920; Sir W. Lawson, 920 *April* 9

LLOYD-GEORGE, Mr. DAVID, *Carnarvon Boroughs*
- Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 775, 776
- Local Government Board *April* 2, 450
- London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill *April* 28, 1181
- Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1196

Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Bill

c. Intro., Mr. J. P. Smith; Read 1° *April* 27, 1141

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill

c. 2R., Mr. H. Hobhouse *April* 30, 1404

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment (No. 2) Bill

c. Intro., Mr. Cozens-Hardy; Read 1° *April* 28, 1224

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD

President—Mr. H. CHAPLIN
Secretary—Mr. T. W. RUSSELL

- *Agricultural Rating Act 1896, Qs.* Mr. W. C. Quilter; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 1, 289. *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1610
- *Allotments*
  - *Acts, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 115
  - *Cornwall, Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 27, 1138
  - *Devon, Qs.* Mr. Seale-Hayne; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 624
- *Burial Ground, Debenham, Suffolk, Q.* Mr. F. S. Stevenson; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 607
- *Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board, Q.* Mr. J. Stuart; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 108. *Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 12, 936
- *County Councils, Loans from Officials, Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 8, 739
- *Coventry Sewage, Q.* Mr. C. J. Murray; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *May* 3, 1417
- *Death of Workhouse Inmate, City of London, Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1613
- *Debenham (Suffolk) Burial Ground, Q.* Mr. F. S. Stevenson; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 607
- *Department* (see Title LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD DEPARTMENT)
- *Deportation of Paupers, Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 636
- *Hampstead Union Workhouse, Q.* Mr. J. G. Talbot; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 597
- *Liverpool Parochial Rates, Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 607
- *Local Government Act 1894, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 623
- *Local Officers' Superannuation Bill, Q.* Mr. T. R. Leuty; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 6, 633
- *London*
  - *City of, Death of Workhouse Inmate, Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1613
  - *Water Supply*
    - *County Council, Q.* Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 120
    - *Royal Commission, Qs.* Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. H. H. Marks; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 98. *Q.* Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 625. *Qs.* Mr. B. L. Cohen, Mr. C. A. Whitmore, Mr. S. Woods; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 29, 1230
- *Oyster Culture, Qs.* Sir W. O. Priestley; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 8, 737
- *Parish*
  - *Council, Marnock, Banffshire, Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 739
  - *Councils, Qs.* Mr. J. W. Logan; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1606
  - *Meeting, Carew, Pembrokeshire, Q.* Mr. Rees Davies; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 635
- *Parochial Rates, Liverpool, Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 607

[*cont.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—cont.
  Plague, Indian Transport Dilwara, Q. Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 30, 1346
  Sewage, Coventry, Q. Mr. C. J. Murray; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *May* 3, 1417
  Swansea Workhouse, Roman Catholic Children, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 620
  Urban Roads and Footpaths, Q. Mr. H. Broadhurst; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 1, 261
  Vaccination
    Acts, Qs. Mr. J. W. Logan; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin, Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 283
    Royal Commission, Q. General Laurie; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 30, 1341. *Q.* Mr. C. J. Monk; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1592
  Verminous Persons Bill (see that Title)
  Watersheds, Q. Mr. W. Hazell; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 29, 1229
  Workhouses
    Hampstead Union, Q. Mr. J. G. Talbot; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 597
    London, City of, Death of Inmate, Q. Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1613
    Swansea, Roman Catholic Children, Qs. Mr. M. J. Flavin; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 620

Local Government Board Department
  On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 450; Mr. T. W. Russell, 451 *April* 2

Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill
l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

LOCKWOOD, Colonel A., *Essex, Epping*
  Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 711
  Chelsea Hospital *April* 5, 506, 507
  East London Water Company *April* 8, 727
  Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 352
  Secondary Education *April* 1, 282
  Verminous Persons Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 919

LOCKWOOD, Sir FRANK, *York*
  Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 776
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 816, 817, 818, 819

LODER, Mr. GERALD W. E., *Brighton*
  Queen's Reign, Children's Extra Holidays *May* 4, 1517

LOGAN, Mr. J. W., *Leicester, Harborough*
  Parish Councils *May* 6, 1606
  Vaccination Acts *April* 1, 283, 284

London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill
c. Considered as Amended: Mr. D. Lloyd-George *April* 28, 1181

LONDON, Lord Bishop of *(Dr. Mandell Creighton)*
  Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 67

LONG, RIGHT HON. WALTER H. (President of the Board of Agriculture), *Liverpool, West Derby*
  Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 700, 702, 703, 710, 711
  Death from Cat-bite *April* 29, 1246
  Extraordinary Tithe Bill, Intro. *May* 3, 1512
  Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill *April* 12, 946
  Muzzling Dogs *April* 29, 1230; *May* 3, 1409, 1410
  Supply: £132,291 for Survey of United Kingdom *April* 9, 917
  Swine Fever, Essex *April* 12, 955
  Weighing Cattle
    Auction Sales *April* 1, 264
    Scotland *April* 9, 864

LOUGH, Mr. THOMAS, *Islington, W.*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1681
  Budget *April* 28, 1224; *April* 29, 1312, 1317, 1333
  Business of the House *Mar* 30, 184
  Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1081, 1100
  Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 572
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 187, 189, 192, 206; *April* 5, 538
  Imperial Revenue, Collection and Expenditure *April* 6, 598
  Muzzling Dogs *May* 3, 1409, 1410
  Patent Office Extension Bill *April* 12, 1057
  Privilege Cabs *April* 8, 753
  Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 327
  Supply
    £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 892
    £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 878, 886
    £16,000 for Science and Art Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 904
    £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1360
    £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 914
  Telegraph Wires, City of London *May* 6, 1606, 1608
  Voluntary and Board Schools, Grants *April* 29, 1245

LOWLES, Mr. J., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*
  Importation of Foreign-manufactured Goods *April* 27, 1179
  Queen's Reign, Release of Prisoners *May* 4, 1517
  Supply: £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 895

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cumberland, Penrith*

Income Tax Bill, Intro. *April* 30, 1402

(*Rulings as Chairman of Committees*)

Budget

The Chairman pointed out, that the hon. Member was now going into details relating to a Blue-book the consideration of which, by the common consent of the Committee, had been deferred to a later day. Of course, he had no power to prevent the hon. Member from going into the matter *April* 29, 1322

The Chairman said, he had stated that, as a point of order, he could not stop the hon. Member from going into the matter; but, now that he was challenged on the matter he was bound to say that it was irrelevant at the present stage to go into the minute details of a Blue-book, and, therefore, he must request the hon. Member to desist from going into them *April* 29, 1322

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill

The Chairman said: "The principle of the Bill was decided on the Second Reading. The hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Amendment he is moving." *April* 12, 1058

The Chairman said: "I told the hon. Gentlemen he was not in order in discussing the general principle of this Bill, which has been already decided by the House. He is moving an Amendment, and he must confine himself to that Amendment." *April* 12, 1059

The Chairman said: "There is no necessity for an hon. Member to rise at all. The Standing Order simply says that those who support the decision of the Chairman shall rise, and that those who challenge it shall also rise. There is no power to compel an hon. Member to rise who does not wish to do so." *April* 12, 1063

Supply: £23,000 for Houses of Parliament Building

The Chairman said: "The hon. Member is misinformed. It is only Members of the House who are committed to the Clock Tower." *April* 9, 894

Supply: £5,177 for Land Registry

The Chairman said, the question of legislation dealing with Land Transfer could not be discussed on that Vote *April* 30, 1368

The Chairman said, if the hon. Gentleman had any suggestion to make by means of which the Land Registry Office could be made more useful under the existing legislation, he would be in order, but if the only suggestion he could make was that certain fresh legislation should be introduced in order to make the office more useful, he would not be in order *April* 30, 1370

[*cont.*

Lowther, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*

(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)—cont.

Supply: £3,400 for Police Courts, London and Sheerness

The Chairman said: "I do not quite follow how the hon. Gentleman connects his arguments with the Vote." *April* 30, 1381

The Chairman said: "If the hon. Member means to argue that the Metropolitan Police Force ought to be placed under the London County Council, that would require legislation, and would not be in order on the present Vote." *April* 30, 1381

The Chairman said: "There are no rates levied in respect of the Metropolitan Police Courts. This is a sum charged on the Exchequer. If the hon. Member raises a question of rates, that cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply." *April* 30, 1381

The Chairman said: "The hon. Member is in error. The Metropolitan Police rate does not arise on this Vote." *April* 30, 1382

Supply: £159,100 for Public Buildings (Great Britain)

The Chairman said: "I do not think that the hon. and gallant Gentleman can contend that the Nelson Monument is an ancient monument." *April* 9, 870

Supply: £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature

The Chairman said: "The question before the Committee is not the salaries of the Judges." *April* 30, 1367

The Chairman said: "The remarks of the hon. Gentleman are now out of order." *April* 30, 1368

The Chairman said, it would not be in order to discuss the question of retirement of Judges upon the present item *April* 30, 1368

Miscellaneous Rulings

April 9, 873, 888; *April* 12, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067; *April* 30, 1367, 1368

Lowther, Right Hon. James, *Kent, Isle of Thanet*

Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 716

Budget *April* 29, 1294

Business of the House, Easter Holidays *April* 1, 300

Crete *April* 1, 287

Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 86, 88

Employers' Liability Bill *April* 29, 1249

Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 126

Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 661, 666

Postal

  Charges *April* 12, 944

  Union Convention *April* 8, 738

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill *April* 26, 1077

Waterloo and City Railway *April* 30, 1343

LOYD, Mr. A. K., *Berks, Abingdon*
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 802

LUBBOCK, Right Hon. Sir JOHN, Bart., *London University*
  Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1090
  School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1206, 1211
  Telegraph Offices, Bank Holidays *April* 26, 1074

Lunacy
  Asylums
    Belfast, Death of Inmate, Q. Mr. G. Murnaghan ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 102
    Board, Children's Metropolitan, Q. Mr. J. Stuart ; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 108. *Q.* Mr. E. Flower ; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 12, 936
    Ireland, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 2, 399

LUTTRELL, Mr. H. C. FOWNES, *Devonshire, Tavistock*
  Admiralty Cooper, Bull Point, Devonport *April* 5, 536
  Prison Warders *April* 1, 296
  Supply
    £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 891
    £420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and Colonies *April* 30, 1388

LYTTELTON, Hon. ALFRED, *Warwick and Leamington*
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 805

MACALEESE, Mr. D., *Monaghan, N.*
  Auxiliary Postmen
    Ireland *May* 4, 1526
    Rural *April* 1, 293
  Barbed Wire Fences *May* 3, 1414
  Brookeborough Petty Sessions *April* 30, 1345
  Land Commission, Ireland *April* 12, 927
  Monaghan
    Grand Jury, Road Repairs *April* 5, 527
    Union *May* 4, 1527
    Union Workhouse *April* 5, 527
  Postmastership, Monaghan *April* 12, 934 ; *April* 30, 1348
  Post Office Establishments *April* 2, 385 ; *April* 6, 604
  Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 386
  Rural Auxiliary Postmen *April* 1, 293

MACARTNEY, MR. W. G. ELLISON (Secretary to the Admiralty), *Antrim, S.*
  Aldershot Manœuvres, Royal Marines *April* 6, 604
  Mars Battleship *April* 30, 1344
  Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill, Intro. *April* 1, 356
  Royal Naval Reserve, Wexford *April* 1, 291
  Salt, Her Majesty's Ships *April* 30, 1342
  Stationery, Admiralty *April* 30, 1345

MCCALMONT, General HUGH, *Antrim, N.*
  Horse-breeding, Ireland *April* 1, 295

MCCARTAN, Mr. M., *Down, S.*
  Customs Officers *April* 9, 851
  Land Commission
    Fair Rent Applications *Mar* 30, 103 ; *April* 5, 510 ; *April* 6, 610, 611
    Ireland *April* 1, 267, 268 ; *April* 2, 390 ; *April* 8, 742, 743 ; *April* 9, 852, 853, 854
  Petty Sessions, Ballynahinch *April* 8, 742
  Poor Law Amalgamation (Ireland) Bill *April* 5, 535
  Post Office Establishments *April* 2, 385, 386 ; *April* 5, 531 ; *April* 6, 605 ; *April* 9, 850
  Rifle Range, Tyrella (Down) *April* 8, 745
  Sheriffs, Ireland *April* 8, 740, 741, 742
  Wallace Estate, Antrim *April* 12, 935

MCDONNELL, Dr. M. A., *Queen's County, Leix*
  Militia Training, Queen's County *April* 12, 948

MCGHEE, Mr. R., *Louth, S.*
  Drogheda, County Court and Quarter Sessions *April* 5, 511
  Land Commission, Ireland *April* 1, 266

M'HUGH, Mr. P. A., *Leitrim, N.*
  Assizes, Down *April* 6, 615
  Light Railways, Ireland *April* 9, 848
  Local Loans Stock *April* 9, 847
  Post Office Establishments *April* 5, 530, 531

MCKENNA, Mr. R., *Monmouthshire, N.*
  Africa, European Powers *April* 2, 447
  Bottling Beer *April* 26, 1069 ; *May* 3, 1410
  Crete *April* 1, 285
  Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 570
  Folding Newspapers *May* 3, 1410
  Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1191, 1192, 1193

MCKILLOP, Mr. JAMES, *Stirlingshire*
  Privileges of Members of Parliament *May* 6, 1598

MCLAREN, Mr. C. B. B., *Leicestershire, Bosworth*
  Supply : £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 878

MACLEAN, Mr JAMES M., *Cardiff*
  Postmen, Cardiff *April* 29, 1237
  Turco-Greek War *April* 27, 1133

MCLEOD, Mr. JOHN, *Sutherland*
  Crete *April* 6, 618

MacNeill, Mr. J. G. Swift, *Donegal, S.*
  Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1670
  Army Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 278, 279
  Crete *April* 1, 285, 287; *April* 2, 405, 406
  Experiments on Living Animals *May* 6, 1603
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 173
  Foreign
    Affairs, Questions *Mar* 30, 123
    Office *April* 2, 409
  Irish Mail Service *May* 6, 1602
  Land Commission, Ireland *April* 1, 267
  Prime Minister, Absence Abroad *April* 1, 298, 301, 302
  Queen's Reign, Bank Holiday *April* 2, 411

Malcolm, Mr. I. Z., *Suffolk, Stowmarket*
  Channel Passenger Service, Customs Examination *May* 3, 1413

Manchester, Lord Bishop of *(Dr. James Moorhouse)*
  Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 46, 47

Mandeville, Mr. Francis, *Tipperary, S.*
  Education, Ireland *April* 2, 400

Maple, Sir John Blundell, *Camberwell, Dulwich*
  School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1205
  Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1186, 1189, 1193; In Com. *May* 3, 1511

Market Gardeners' Compensation (Scotland) Bill
c. Read 2° *May* 5, 1586
  Order for Com. Read and Discharged; com. to Standing Com. on Trade, Etc. *May* 6, 1700

Marks, Mr. Harry H., *Tower Hamlets, St. George's*
  London Water Supply, Royal Commission *Mar* 30, 99
  Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1181, 1202, 1205

Mellor, Colonel J. J., *Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth*
  Employers' Liability Act, East Lancashire Paper Mill Co. *April* 12, 929

MERCHANT SHIPPING
  Belmullet and Achill, Steam Communication, *Qs.* Earl of Arran; *As.* Viscount Cross *April* 8, 722
  British Steamer Stopped at Syra, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 29, 1237
  Canadian Fast Steamship Service, *Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 9, 847

[*cont.*

MERCHANT SHIPPING—cont.
  Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 842; *May* 4, 1413
  Channel Passenger Service, Customs Examination, *Qs.* Mr. Ian Malcolm, Mr. Gibson Bowles; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1413
  Cromarty Firth, Anchorage, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 843
  Daunt's Rock Lightship, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 2, 388
  Fishery
    Board, Scotland, *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1518
    Cruiser Vigilant, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1345
  Foghorns, Lighthouses and, Scotland, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 599
  Harbours
    Howth, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 528
    Kingstown, Boat Accidents, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 99
    Longford Canal, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1596
    Port Ness, Lewis, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 840
  Herring Brand Fees, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 3, 1408
  Howth Harbour, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 528
  Illegal Trawling
    Danish Waters, *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1523
    Lewis, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1070
    Moray Firth, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1077. *Qs.* General Russell, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1231. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1349
    Scottish Waters, in, *Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. Hedderwick; [Mr. Speaker]; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 735. *Qs.* Mr. R. B. Haldane, Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 838. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 27, 1126
  Kingstown Harbour, Boat Accidents, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 99
  Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill (see that Title)
  Lewis
    Illegal Trawling, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1070
    Piers, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 855. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. H. T. Anstruther *April* 27, 1128
    Port Ness Harbour, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 840
  Light Dues on Shipping, *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Lewis, Mr. J. O'Kelly; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 1, 292
  Lighthouses
    Foghorns, and, Scotland, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 599
    Tiumpan Head, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1126

[*cont.*

MERCHANT SHIPPING—cont.
- *Liverpool Docks, Loading Accidents*, Q. Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 945
- *Longford Canal Harbour*, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 6, 1596
- *Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Moray Firth, Illegal Trawling in*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1077; *April* 30, 1349
- *Mussel Beds*, *Qs.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 862, *May* 3, 1408
- *North Sea Fisheries Convention*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 5, 512. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Mr. Curzon *April* 6, 602. *Q.* Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 753
- *Piers and Harbours* (see that Title)
- *Piers, Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 855. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. H. T. Anstruther *April* 27, 1128
- *Sailors' Home, Cork*, *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan, Mr. E. H. Carson; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 754
- *Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts, Amendment Bill*, (see that Title)
- *Seal Life, North Pacific*, *Q.* Mr. H. Seton-Karr; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Mar* 30, 109
- *Steamship Darwin*, *Q.* Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1418
- *Thames Conservancy, Bye-laws*, *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 29, 1238
- *Tiumpan Head Lighthouse*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1126
- *Trawling*
  - *Beam and Otter*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Curzon *May* 3, 1407
  - *Illegal* (see subhead *Illegal Trawling* above)

Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill

c. 2R., Mr. Ritchie, 1492, 1499; Mr. J. Bryce, 1496; Mr. J. Havelock Wilson, 1497; Sir A. B. Forwood, 1498 *May* 3
Read 2° and com. to Standing Com. on Trade, etc. *May* 3, 1499

Mersey Channels Bill

c. In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *May* 5, 1588

METROPOLIS
- *British Museum*, *Q.* Mr. Sydney Gedge; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 6, 637
- *Brixton Prison*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 949
- *Chelsea Hospital*, *Qs.* Colonel Lockwood, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 5, 506
- *City of London*,
  - *Death of Workhouse Inmate*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1613
  - *Telegraph Wires*, *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Alban Gibbs; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1606
- *General Post Office*, *Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1415

METROPOLIS—cont.
- *Hampstead Union Workhouse*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Talbot; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin, *April* 6, 597
- *Highway Robberies*, *Q.* Mr. T. B. Curran; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 951
- *Holy Trinity Church School, Gray's Inn Road*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Grant Lawson *May* 3, 1406
- *Household Cavalry Exercises*, *Qs.* Mr. F. A. Newdigate, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *May* 3, 1415
- *House of Commons*
  - *Members and Private Secretaries*, *Q.* Mr. C. W. Cayzer; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Mar* 30, 117
  - *Sale of Intoxicants*, *Qs.* Sir W. Lawson; *As.* Lord Stanley *April* 9, 837
- *Houses of Parliament*
  - *Electric Lighting*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir: *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 6, 603
  - *Terrace Doorway*, *Q.* Sir H. Fowler, *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 5, 525
- *Immigrants, East London*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1237
- *Kew Gardens*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 8, 735
- *Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill* (see that Title)
- *London*
  - *County Council, Water Supply*, *Q.* Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 120
  - *Water Supply, Royal Commission*, *Qs.* Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. H. H. Marks; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 98. *Q.* Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 625. *Qs.* Mr B. L. Cohen, Mr. C. A. Whitmore, Mr. S. Woods; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 29, 1230
- *Metropolitan*
  - *Asylums Board, Children's*, *Q.* Mr. J. Stuart; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 108. *Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 12, 936
  - *Police, Boots*, *Qs.* Captain Norton; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 6, 618
- *Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, Overcrowding*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 512. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1070. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1227
- *Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill* (see that Title)
- *Metropolitan Police Courts (Holidays) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Middlesex County Council*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 948
- *Privilege Cabs*, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 753
- *Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee* (see that Title)
- *School Board for London (Elections) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Telegraph Wires, City of London*, *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Alban Gibbs; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1606
- *Thames Conservancy, Bye-laws*, *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 29, 1238

[*cont*

METROPOLIS—cont.
Waterloo and City Railway, *Qs.* Sir H. Vincent, Mr. C. E. Schwann, Mr. J. Lowther; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1342
Water Supply, *London*
  County Council, *Q.* Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 120
  Royal Commission, *Qs.* Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. H. H. Marks; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Mar* 30, 98. *Q.* Mr. Sydney Buxton; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 625. *Qs.* Mr. B. L. Cohen, Mr. C. A. Whitmore, Mr. S. Woods; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 29, 1230
Workhouse, *City of London*, *Death of Inmate*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1613

Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Jesse Collings, 1500; Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, 1503; *Adj.* *May* 3, 1505

Metropolitan Police Courts (Holidays) Bill
c. Sir Matthew White Ridley, (*Motion for leave to Intro.*) *May* 6, 1617
  Intro., Sir Matthew White Ridley; Read 1º *May* 6, 1618

MILDMAY, Mr. F. B., *Devon*, *Totnes*
  Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 680, 681, 685
  Belfast Roman Catholic School *April* 12, 943
  Seaforth Highlanders, 1st Battalion *May* 6, 1614

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill
c. Read 3º and Passed *Mar* 30, 181
l. Read 1ª *April* 1, 257
  2R., Marquess of Lansdowne, 379; Earl Spencer, 379 *April* 2
  Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *April* 2, 379
  In Com., Rep. without Amendt.; Standing Com. negatived *April* 5, 498
  Read 3ª and Passed *April* 6, 593
  Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

Military Works Bill
c. Read 3º and Passed *April* 1, 303
l. Read 1ª *April* 2, 357
  2R., Marquess of Lansdowne, 488; Earl Spencer, 496 *April* 5
  Read 2ª; Com. negatived *April* 5, 498
  Read 3ª and Passed *April* 6, 593
  Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

MILWARD, Colonel VICTOR, *Warwickshire*, *Stratford-on-Avon*
  Budget *April* 29, 1305

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill
c. 2R., Mr. W. Allen, 1541; Sir B. W. Foster, 1544, 1547; Mr. J. Wilson, (Durham) 1547, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1572, 1574; Sir E. Leese, 1549, 1567; Sir A. Hickman, 1551; Mr. D. A. Thomas, 1553, (*Amendt.*) 1555; Mr. S. Woods, 1553, 1577; Colonel Blundell, 1553; Mr. B. Pickard, 1555, 1561, 1569, 1570, 1573, 1575; Sir J. Joicey, 1556, 1558, 1561; Mr. T. Bayley, 1558, 1576; Sir C. Dilke, 1563, 1567, 1572; Mr. T. W. Legh, 1575, 1576, 1577; Mr. E. Bainbridge, 1578; Mr. W. Abraham (Rhondda), 1580; (*Division*, 1580) *May* 5
  2R. negatived *May* 5, 1583

Mining Royalties
  Mr. Atherley-Jones, (*Notice of Motion*) *May* 4, 1514

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Barbed Wire Fences, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *May* 3, 1414
Betting Messages, *Q.* Mr. R. Ascroft; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1528
Bimetallism, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 953
Bottling Beer, *Qs.* Mr. R. McKenna; *As.* Sir Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 26, 1069; *May* 3, 1410
Brewing Materials, *Q.* Mr. A. M. Brookfield; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 6, 596
British Museum, *Q.* Mr. Sydney Gedge; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 6, 637
Carbide of Calcium, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Sir R. Webster *April* 1, 296; *April* 2, 409
Crewe, *Representation of*, *Qs.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 27, 1139
Death from Cat-bite, *Q.* Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 29, 1246
Experiments on Living Animals, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1228. *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1603
Folding of Newspapers, *Q.* Mr. R. McKenna, *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 3, 1410
Foreign
  Codes of Law, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *May* 3, 1421
  Lotteries, *Q.* Mr. E. Hubbard; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1520
Gambling in Options and Futures, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 508. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 941
Importation of Foreign-manufactured Goods (see that Title)
Insurance of Poor Persons, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Mar* 30, 122
Local Loans Stock, *Qs.* Mr. J. J. Shee; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 1, 270. *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 9, 847
Mayflower, *Log of the*, *Q.* Mr. H. C. Richards; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 27, 1135
Mussel Beds, *Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 862
Oyster Culture, *Qs.* Sir W. O. Priestley; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 8, 737

[*cont.*

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS—cont.
  Public
    Departments, Saturday Half-holiday, Q. Mr. E. J. C. Morton ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1234
    Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 412
  Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee (see that Title)
  Royal Patriotic Commission, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1615
  Salisbury Plain Purchase, Q. Captain Pirie ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 849
  Saturday Half-Holiday, Public Departments, Q. Mr. E. J. C. Morton ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1234
  Unclaimed Funds, Q. Mr. J. E. Gordon ; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 12, 923
  Urban Roads and Footpaths, Q. Mr. H. Broadhurst ; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 1, 261
  Wallace Bequest, Qs. Dr. Farquharson ; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *May* 3, 1420
  Watersheds, Q. Mr. W. Hazell ; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 29, 1229
  Weights and Measures Bill, Q. Mr. J. W. Crombie ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 533
  Working Men's Dwellings, Qs. Mr. J. F. Flannery, Sir H. Vincent ; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 410

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., *King's County, Birr*
  Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill *May* 6, 1613

MONK, Mr. C. J., *Gloucester*
  Budget *April* 29, 1318
  Crete *April* 12, 1007
  Massacre at Eghin *April* 27, 1129
  Post Office Establishments *April* 9, 850
  Vaccination, Royal Commission *May* 6, 1592

MONTAGU, Sir SAMUEL, Bart., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*
  Budget *April* 29, 1324

MORGAN Mr. J. LLOYD, *Carmarthen, W.*
  Jurors' Expenses *May* 4, 1531
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 785

MORLEY, EARL OF (Chairman of Committes [H.L])
  Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) Bill, 3R. *April* 1, 255

MORLEY, Right Hon. JOHN, *Montrose Burghs*
  British South Africa Company *April* 12, 955
  Business of the House
    Easter Holidays *April* 1, 299
    General *Mar* 30, 123 ; *April* 2, 412, 413 ; *May* 6, 1617
  Crete *April* 1, 288 ; *April* 5, 514, 515
  Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 211, 212, 214, 216, 218, 221, 228

MORTON, Mr. E. J. C., *Devonport*
  Crete *April* 12, 1009
  Greece and the Powers *April* 26, 1076, 1077
  Public Departments, Saturday Half-holiday, *April* 29, 1234
  Relief Money and Taxation in Asia Minor *April* 30, 1349
  Tenure and Ownership of Land in Towns *April* 27, 1125
  Tokat Massacre *April* 27, 1135, 1136 ; *April* 29, 1242
  Transvaal, Vaal Drifts *May* 3, 1417
  Turco-Greek War *April* 27, 1133, 1134 ; *April* 29, 1241 ; *May* 3, 1416

MOUNT, Mr. WILLIAM GEORGE, *Berks, Newbury*
  Midland Railway Company *April* 1, 289

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill
c. Withdrawn *May* 5, 1586

MURNAGHAN, Mr. G., *Tyrone, Mid*
  Belfast Lunatic Asylum, Death of Inmate *Mar* 30, 102
  Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 711
  Jurors, Tyrone *May* 6, 1608
  Land Commission, Ireland *April* 2, 393

MURRAY, Colonel C. WYNDHAM, *Bath*
  Army Recruiting *April* 5, 508
  British Troops in India, Health *April* 6, 607

MURRAY, Mr. CHARLES, *Coventry*
  Sewage, Coventry *May* 3, 1417

MURRAY, RIGHT HON. A. GRAHAM (Lord Advocate), *Buteshire*
  Burial Grounds Loans, Scotland Bill, Intro. *April* 12, 957
  Carloway Road, Lewis *April* 6, 630 ; *April* 29, 1234
  Constabulary, Scotland *May* 4, 1515
  Crofters' Commission, Report *May* 3, 1419
  Deportation of Paupers *April* 5, 522
  Edinburgh University Library *April* 29, 1227
  Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 353, 354 ; In Com. *May* 3, 1500
  Education, Scotland *May* 4, 1530
  Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act *April* 6, 599
  Fishery
    Board, Scotland *May* 4, 1518
    Cruiser *Vigilant April* 30, 1345
  Glebe of Kintail, Foreshore *April* 8, 728
  Herring Brand Fees *May* 3, 1408
  Illegal Trawling
    Danish Waters *May* 4, 1523
    Lewis *April* 26, 1070
    Moray Firth *April* 26, 1077 ; *April* 29, 1231 ; *April* 30, 1349
    Scottish Waters *April* 8, 736 ; *April* 9, 839, 840

[*cont.*

MURRAY, Right Hon. A. GRAHAM—*cont.*
  Inspector of Poor, Kiltearn, Ross-shire *April* 8, 730
  Justices of the Peace, Scotland *May* 4, 1520
  Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 815
  Lewis
    Carloway Road *April* 6, 630 ; *April* 29, 1234
    Illegal Trawling *April* 26, 1070
    Island of *April* 6, 630
    Piers *April* 9, 855
    Port Ness Harbour *April* 9, 840
  Local Government Board for Scotland, Report *April* 29, 1243 ; *May* 4, 1518
  Mussel Beds *April* 9, 862 ; *May* 3, 1408
  Parish Council, Marnock, Banffshire *April* 8, 740
  Paupers
    Deportation of *April* 5, 522
    Queen's Reign *April* 1, 265
  Piers, Lewis *April* 9, 855
  Police, Counties, Scotland *April* 8, 729
  Port Ness Harbour, Lewis *April* 9, 840
  Prisons, Scotland *Mar* 30, 105
  Privileges of Members of Parliament *May* 6, 1598
  Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 304, 307, 310, 313, 314
  Queen's Reign, Paupers *April* 1, 265
  Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 584, 585; In Com. *April* 12, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1082, 1063, 1064 1065, 1068
  School
    Board Elections, Scotland *April* 5, 513
    Inspectors, Scotland *April* 12, 954
  Science and Art Grants, Scotland *April* 30, 1342
  Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction, Scotland Bill, Intro. *April* 12, 957
  Supply : £52,277 for Prisons, Scotland *April* 30, 1399
  Trawling, Illegal (see Illegal Trawling above)
  Water Supply, Causer, Inverness-shire *April* 9, 844

MYERS, Mr. W. H., *Winchester*
  Hants Regiment, 1st Volunteer Battalion *April* 1, 283
  Winchester Barracks *April* 9, 840

NAVY

  First Lord—Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN
  Secretary—Mr. W. G. E. MACARTNEY
  Civil Lord—Mr. J. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN

  Aldershot Manœuvres, Royal Marines, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 6, 604
  Channel Fleet, Q. Mr. Hedderwick ; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 2, 401. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir ; *As.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 5, 512
  Coopers
    Bull Point, Devonport, Q. Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 5, 536
    Deptford Victualling Yard, Q. Mr. C. J. Darling ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 755

[*cont.*

NAVY—cont.
  Cork, Sailors' Home, Qs. Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan, Mr. E. H. Carson ; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 754
  Cromarty Firth, Anchorage, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 843
  Dockyard, Haulbowline, Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chambertain *April* 9, 854
  Expenditure, Qs. Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. J. O'Kelly ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 411. *Qs.* Captain Donelan ; *As.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 5, 523
  Fishery Cruiser, Vigilant, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1345
  Food Supplies, United Kingdom, Q. Mr. H. Seton-Karr ; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *May* 4, 1519
    (For Debate see that Title)
  Guns, Q. Captain Norton ; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 12, 947
  Haulbowline Dockyard, Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 9, 854
  H.M.S.
    Black Prince, Haulbowline Dockyard, Q. Captain Donelan ; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 9, 854
    Mars, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 30, 1344
    Vigilant, Fishery Cruiser, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1345
  Illegal Trawling
    Moray Firth, Qs. General Russell, Sir C. Cameron ; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1231
    Scottish Waters, in, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 27, 1126
  Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill (see that Title)
  Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Procession, Q. Mr. J. F. Flannery ; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 12, 945
  Retired Soldiers and Sailors, Employment, Qs. Mr. A. M. Brookfield, Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 9, 865
  Royal
    Marines, Aldershot Manœuvres, Q. Mr. H. E. Kearley ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 6, 604
    Naval Reserve, Wexford, Q. Mr. P. Ffrench ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 1, 291
  Sailors' Home, Cork, Qs. Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan, Mr. E. H. Carson ; *As.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *April* 8, 754
  Salt, Her Majesty's Ships, Q. Sir C. Cameron ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 30, 1342
  Stationery, Admiralty, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Macartney *April* 30, 1344

Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill

c. Intro., Mr. Macartney ; Read 1° *April* 1, 356
  2R., Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, 1120 ; Lord G. Hamilton, 1120 ; [Mr. Speaker, 1120] *April* 26
  Read 2° *April* 26, 1120
  In Com., Mr. E. H. Pickersgill *April* 29, 1336
  Rep. without Amendt. *April* 29, 1337
  Read 3° and Passed *April* 29, 1337
l. Read 1ª *May* 3, 1405

NEWDIGATE, Mr. F. A., *Warwickshire, Nuneaton*
Household Cavalry Exercises *May* 3, 1415
Transvaal, Uitlanders *April* 27, 1140

NORFOLK, DUKE OF (Postmaster General)
Irish Mail Service *April* 6, 594

NORTON, Captain C. W., *Newington, W.*
Army Medical Service *April* 8, 758
Civil Service, Second Division Clerks *Mar* 30, 104
Metropolitan Police Boots *April* 6, 618
Naval Guns *April* 12, 947
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 12, 946
Reply Letter Cards *April* 6, 612; *April* 26, 1073
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1188
Workmen's Trains *April* 6, 619

NORTON, Lord
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 63; *April* 2, 378

O'BRIEN, Mr. PATRICK, *Kilkenny City*
Army Regulations, Wearing the Shamrock *April* 1, 280; *April* 5, 530
Arrest for Drunkenness, Omagh *Mar* 30, 121, 122
Auxiliary Sorting Clerks, Limerick *April* 5, 509
Custom House, Dublin *Mar* 30, 109
Education, Ireland *April* 2, 400
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *April* 1, 300
Gambling in Options and Futures *April* 5, 508
Ivory (Mr. Edward), Case of *April* 12, 952
Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 345
Labourers
  Acts, Ireland *April* 1, 272
  Cottage, Ireland *April* 12, 941
Land Commission, Ireland *April* 12, 927
Post Office Establishments *April* 1, 280, *April* 30, 1347
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 328; *April* 2, 412
Tullamore Gaol *Mar* 30, 120
Venezuelan Boundary *April* 12, 954

O'BRIEN, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary, N.*
Irish Mail Service *April* 5, 524

O'CONNOR, Mr. ARTHUR, *Donegal, E.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1639
Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1037
Budget Resolutions *April* 30, 1352
Crete *April* 27, 1132
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 242
Immigrants, East London *April* 29, 1237
Irish Mail Service *April* 29, 1238
Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, Overcrowding *April* 26, 1070

[*cont.*

O'CONNOR, Mr. ARTHUR—*cont.*
Postal Facilities, Newtown Cunningham (Donegal) *April* 26, 1072
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1213
Service Franchise Bill *April* 28, 1203
Supply
  £16,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings *April* 9, 908
  £420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and Colonies *April* 30, 1389, 1392
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 6, 630

O'CONNOR, Mr. JAMES, *Wicklow, W.*
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 93

O'CONNOR, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 234

O'KELLY, Mr. JAMES, *Roscommon, N.*
Light Dues on Shipping *April* 1, 293
Naval Expenditure *April* 2, 412

OLDROYD, Mr. MARK, *Dewsbury*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1490

O'MALLEY, Mr. W., *Galway, Connemara*
Irish Mail Service *April* 8, 740

Parliament.

LORDS—
Business of the House
  Adjournment—Duke of Devonshire, (*Motion*) *April* 2, 383
  Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills—Suspension of Standing Orders Nos. XCII and XCIII *April* 8, 722
  Standing Orders—Nos. XCII and XCIII suspended, and time for depositing Petitions against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills extended *April* 8, 722

Miscellaneous
  Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Facilities for Peers and Peeresses, Qs. Earl Stanhope, Earl of Feversham; *As.* Viscount Cross *April* 5, 485

New Peer Introduced
  April 8—Charles George Viscount Cobham and Baron Cobham, having succeeded to those Titles on the death of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Viscount Cobham, Baron Cobham, etc.

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—Lords—cont.

Representative Peer for Ireland
Kingstown, Earl of, Claim Established *April* 6, 593
Certificate Ordered *April* 8, 721

Sat First
April 8—Lord Hay (Earl Kinnoul), after the death of his father

COMMONS—

Business of the House and Public Business
Adjournment, Easter—Mr. A. J. Balfour (*Motion*) 957, 974, 981, 982, 988, 990, 994, 997, 1002, 1005; Sir C. Dilke, 958, 1013; Mr. Curzon, 964, 972, 991, 1020; Sir R. T. Reid, 972; Sir W. Harcourt, 974, 976, 981, 982, 984, 988, 990, 991, 993, 997, 1014; Lord G. Hamilton, 976; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 984; Admiral Field, 993, 1011, 1013, 1014; Mr. P. J. Stanhope, 997; Mr. F. S. Stevenson, 1002, 1006; Mr. H. Labouchere, 1005, 1029, (*Amendt.*) 1029; Mr. C. J. Monk, 1007; Mr. E. J. C. Morton, 1009; Mr. J. Dillon, 1016, 1020; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1020; Mr. T. W. Legh, 1024; Mr. H. J. Gladstone, 1027, 1028; Mr. G. J. Goschen, 1028, 1029; Captain Pirie, 1030; (*Division*, 1030); Mr. T. M. Healy, 1030, 1031; [Mr. Speaker, 1031;] (*Motion Agreed to*, 1032) *April* 12
Business of the House—On Motion for Adj.: Mr. Vesey Knox, 182, Mr. T. M. Healy, 183; Mr. A. J. Balfour 183; Mr. T. Lough, 184 *Mar* 30
Sir C. Dilke, 836; Mr. J. P. Farrell, 836; Mr. A. J. Balfour 836 *April* 8
Qs. Mr. J. Morley, Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 30, 123. *Qs.* Mr. J. Morley, Mr. J. Dillon, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 412. *Qs.* Sir C. Dilke, Mr. F. A. Channing, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir W. Harcourt, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Sir J. Gorst, Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 9, 858. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. H. Lewis; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 9, 919. *Qs.* Mr. W. S. Robson; Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1140. *Qs.* Mr. J. Morley, Mr. T. Burt; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1617
Divisions, House of Commons, Qs. Mr. H. V. Duncombe; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1247
Easter Holidays, Qs. Mr. J. Ellis, Mr. J. Morley, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. Bryce, Mr. J. J. Clancy, Mr. J. Lowther; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 299
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, Q. Viscount Cranborne; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1249. *Q.* Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *May* 3, 1420

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—Commons—cont.

Business of the House and Public Business—cont.
Employers' Liability Bill, Q. Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1249
Enlistment Regulations, Q. Captain Pirie; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 953
Foreign Affairs
Questions, Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Mar* 30, 122
Under Secretary of State, Q. Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 2, 409
Vote, Q. Sir W. Harcourt; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1248
Irish Board of Works Vote, Qs. Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. J. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1352
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 957
London Water Companies Bill — Mr. J. Stuart, (*Notices of Motions*) 726, 727; Colonel Lockwood, 727 *April* 8
Prime Minister, Absence Abroad, Qs. Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 298. *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 2, 409
(For Debate see that Title)
Private Bill Procedure
Scotland, Q. Mr. W. Thorburn; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 6, 638. *Q.* Mr. A. D. Provand; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 30, 1351
United Kingdom, Q. Mr. D. A. Thomas; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 4, 1518
Supply, Qs. Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 6, 641. *Q.* Sir W. Harcourt; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1248. *Qs.* Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. J. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1352

Committees
Burial Grounds, Select—Appointed *May* 3, 1512
Industries (Ireland) Bill, Select—Nominated *April* 5, 539
Money Lending, Select—Appointed *April* 6, 676
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, Select: Nominated *April* 5, 539
Standing, Chairmen's Panel—Reported, That they had appointed Mr. J. Ellis to act as Chairman of the Standing Com. for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures *May* 5, 1588

Members
House of Commons, Members and Private Secretaries, Q. Mr. C. W. Cayzer; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Mar* 30, 117
Privileges, Q. Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 6, 1598
Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee (see that Title)

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—Commons—cont.
Miscellaneous
Crewe, Representation of, Qs. Mr. H. Labouchere; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 27, 1139
Election Petition, Qs. Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 5, 538
House of Commons, Sale of Intoxicants, Qs. Sir W. Lawson; *As.* Lord Stanley *April* 9, 837
Houses of Parliament
Electric Lighting, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 6, 603
Terrace Doorway, Q. Sir H. Fowler; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 5, 525
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill (see that Title)
Parliamentary Committee, Shorthand Writers, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 923
Service Franchise Bill (see that Title)

New Member Affirmed
April 29—Alfred Edward Pease, esquire, for County of York, North Riding (Cleveland Division)

Parliamentary Elections (Official Expenses)
Mr. Hedderwick, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 27, 1125

Patent Office Extension Bill
c. 2R., Sir M. Hicks Beach, 589; Dr. Tanner, 589; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 589 *April* 5
Read 2° *April* 5, 590
Mr. J. P. Farrell, 590; [Mr. Speaker, 590;] Dr. Tanner, 590 *April* 5
Committed to a Select Com. *April* 5, 590
In Com., Mr. Akers-Douglas, (*Motion for Expenses*) 1057; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1057; Mr. T. Lough, 1057; (*Division*, 1057) *April* 12
Reso. Rep. and Agreed to *April* 26, 1124

PAULTON, Mr. J. M., *Durham, Bishop Auckland*
Juvenile Prisoners *May* 3, 1411

PEASE, Sir JOSEPH W., *Durham, Barnard Castle*
Budget *April* 29, 1303
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1433, 1460

Pensions
Crimean Veteran: Brennan (John), Q. Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 1, 290
East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill (see that Title)
Law Offices, Superannuation, Q. Mr. C. E. Tritton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 862
Local Officers' Superannuation Bill, Q. Mr. T. R. Leuty; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 6, 633

[*cont.*

Pensions—cont.
National School Teachers, Ireland, Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 533
Post Office Servants, Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 113
Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill (see that Title)
Royal Irish Constabulary, Qs. Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir T. G. Esmonde, Mr. J. Tully; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 2, 386
Teachers' Pension Fund, Ireland, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1529

PHILLPOTTS, Captain A. S., *Devonshire, Torquay*
East India, Officers of General List *Mar* 30, 95

PICKARD, Mr. B., *York, W.R., Normanton*
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1555, 1561, 1569, 1570, 1573, 1575

PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
Brixton Prison *April* 12, 949
Felon Convicts *April* 2, 454
Foreign Codes of Law *May* 3, 1421
Indian Civil Service, Judicial Branch *April* 12, 950
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 788
Local Bye-laws *April* 12, 951
Medical Inspectorship of Prisons *April* 27, 1137
Metropolitan and Other Police Courts Bill, 2R. *May* 3, 1503
Middlesex County Council *April* 12, 948
Navy and Marines (Wills) Act (1865) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1120; In Com. *April* 29, 1336
Postmen, Provincial Towns *April* 29, 1246
Post Office Answers *April* 2, 408
Prisons
Brixton *April* 12, 949
Medical Inspectorship of *April* 27, 1137
Supply
£43,177 for Law Officers' Department, Salaries, etc. *April* 30, 1353
£41,107 for Metropolitan Police, Pay and Expenses *April* 30, 1382
£420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and Colonies *April* 30, 1385
Volunteers' Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1121

Piers and Harbours
Mr. Edwin Lawrence, (*Motion*) *April* 27, 1180

PIRIE, Captain DUNCAN V., *Aberdeen, N.*
Brigade of Guards *April* 5, 521
British Troops in India, Health of *Mar* 30, 96
Cavalry Horses *April* 5, 522; *April* 8, 750
Crete *Mar* 30, 112, 113; *April* 1, 284; *April* 12, 1030
Enlistment Regulations *April* 8, 750, 751; *April* 12, 953
Illegal Trawling in Scottish Waters *April* 8, 735, 736
Militia Officers *April* 5, 521
Salisbury Plain, Purchase *April* 9, 849
Sanitary Measures, India *April* 8, 751

Plumbers' Registration Bill

c. 2R., Mr. Lees Knowles, 1402; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 1402; Dr. Farquharson, 1403 *April* 30

Read 2° *April* 30, 1403

On Motion to Refer to Standing Com. on Trade, Etc.: Mr. S. Evans, 1403; Mr. T.W. Russell, 1403 *April* 30

Committed to Standing Com. on Trade, Etc. *April* 30, 1404

PLUNKETT, Hon. HORACE C., *Dublin County, S.*

Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1631

Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1052, 1053

Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 157, 160

Irish Mail Service *April* 12, 930

Kingstown Harbour Roads Transfer Bill *April* 12, 952

Poor Relief (Ireland) Bill

c. Mr. G. Balfour, (*Motion for Leave to Intro.*) 833; Mr. T. M. Healy, 833; Mr. J. P. Farrell, 833 *April* 8

Intro., Mr. G. Balfour; Read 1° *April* 8, 833

POST OFFICE

Postmaster General—Duke of NORFOLK

Answers, Departmental, Q. Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 408

Australia, Passengers from, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 940

Auxiliary

  Postmen

    Ireland, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1526

    Rural, Q. Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 293

    Sunday Duty, Q. Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1408

  Sorting Clerks, Limerick, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 509

Bank Holidays, Telegraph Offices, Q. Sir J. Lubbock; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1074

Barrow-in-Furness, Telegraphic Addresses, Q. Mr. C. W. Cayzer; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 258

Betting Messages, Q. Mr. R. Ascroft; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1528

Bolton, Postmen, Q. Mr. G. Harwood; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1521

Canadian Mail Service, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1528

Cardiff, Postmen, Q. Mr. J. M. Maclean; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1237

Charleville (Cork) Postal Arrangements, Q. Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 759

Donegal, Postal Facilities, Newtown Cunningham, Q. Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1072

Dublin Post Office, Q. Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1244

Embossed Stamps, Postage, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 837

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE—cont.

England and America, Parcel Traffic, Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 114

Euston and Holyhead, Train Service, Q. Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1347

Extensions, Scotland, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1410

Foreign Lotteries, Q. Mr. E. Hubbard; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1520

General, London, Q. Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1415

Glasgow, Telephone Service, Qs. Mr. F. F. Begg, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1235

Grange, Postal Delivery, Youghal, Q. Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1414

Great Britain and Brazil, Parcel Post, Q. Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 404

Grievances, Q. Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1226

Guernsey, Telephone Service, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 849

Hyde Post Office, Q. Mr. J. W. Sidebotham; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1071

Isle of Man, England and, Telephone Service, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 118

Lewis, Postal Facilities, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1243

Limerick, Auxiliary Sorting Clerks, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 509

London, City of, Telegraph Wires, Qs. Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Alban Gibbs; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1606

Mail Service

  Canada, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *May* 4, 1528

  Irish, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 118. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 274. *Qs.* Mr. M. Austin, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 524. *Q.* Earl of Erne; *A.* Duke of Norfolk *April* 6, 593. *Q.* Mr. W. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 740. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell: *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 856. *Qs.* Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. H. C. Plunkett; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 930. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 27, 1129. *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1238. *Qs.* Dr. Tanner; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1418. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1525; *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. D. Crilly; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1602

Monaghan Postmastership, Qs. Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 934; *April* 30, 1348

Money Orders, Q. Mr. M. J. Flavin; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 118

Nottingham Postmen, Q. Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1593

Parcel

  Post, Great Britain and Brazil, Q. Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 404

  Traffic, England and America, Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 114

Parish Councils, Scotland, and the, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 513

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE—cont.
- *Penny Postage*, *Qs.* Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Arnold-Forster; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1599
- *Pontypridd Postmen*, *Q.* Mr. Alfred Thomas; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1523
- *Postage*
  - *Embossed Stamps*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 837
  - *Penny*, *Qs.* Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Arnold-Forster; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1599
- *Postal*
  - *Arrangements*, *Charleville (Cork)*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 759
  - *Charges*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Lowther; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 944
  - *Delivery*
    - *Grange*, *Youghal*, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1414
    - *Sunday*, *Cavan*, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 394
  - *Facilities*
    - *Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1243
    - *Newtown Cunningham (Donegal)*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1072
    - *Rushden (Northamptonshire)*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1244
  - *Orders*, *Qs.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1611
  - *Reform*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1530
  - *Union Convention*, *Q.* Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 738
- *Post Cards*, *Mourning Borders*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 735
- *Postmastership*, *Monaghan*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 934; *April* 30, 1348
- *Postmen*
  - *Auxiliary*,
    - *Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1526
    - *Rural*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 293
    - *Sunday Duty*, *Q.* Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1408
  - *Bolton*, *Q.* Mr. G. Harwood; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1521
  - *Cardiff*, *Q.* Mr. J. M. Maclean; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1237
  - *Nottingham*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1593
  - *Pontypridd*, *Q.* Mr. Alfred Thomas; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1523
  - *Provincial Towns*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1246
  - *Rural Auxiliary*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 293
- *Post Office*
  - *Answers*, *Departmental*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 408
  - *Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1244

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE—cont.
- *Post Office*—cont.
  - *Establishments*,
    - *General*, *Qs.* Mr. L. R. Holland, Mr. E. Hubbard; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 97. *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 280. *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly, Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. M. McCartan; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 385. *Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. M. McCartan; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 530. *Qs.* Mr. H. E. Kearley, Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. M. Austin; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 604. *Qs.* Mr. C. J. Monk, Mr. M. McCartan, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 850. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1347. *Qs.* Mr. D. Crilly; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1527
    - *Report*, *Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1248
  - *Extensions*, *Scotland*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1410
  - *Grievances*, *Q.* Mr. H. V. Duncombe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1226
  - *Guide*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 627
  - *Hyde*, *Q.* Mr. J. W. Sidebotham; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1071
  - *London*, *General*, *Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1415
  - *Servants*
    - *Dismissal*, *Q.* Viscount Valentia; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 397
    - *Superannuation*, *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 113
  - *Service*, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1344
  - *Thurles (Tipperary)*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1412
- *Post Office Consolidation Bill* (see that Title)
- *Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 626
- *Reform*, *Postal*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1530
- *Reply Letter Cards*, *Qs.* Captain Norton; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 612; *April* 26, 1073
- *Rural Auxiliary Postmen*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 293
- *Rushden*, *Northamptonshire*, *Postal Facilities*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1244
- *Sample Post*, *Q.* Mr. Arnold-Forster; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 526
- *Savings Banks*
  - *Trustee and Post Office*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 27, 1126
  - *Withdrawals*
    - *Deposits of*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1407
    - *Telegraph*, *by*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Hanbury, Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 6, 600. *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1515
- *Servants*
  - *Dismissal*, *Q.* Viscount Valentia; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 397
  - *Post Office*, *Superannuation*, *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 113

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE—cont.
Sorting Clerks Auxiliary, Limerick, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 509
Sunday
Duty Auxiliary Postmen, Q. Mr. G. Lambert; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1408
Postal Delivery, Cavan, Q. Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 394
Telegrams, Belfast, Q. Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 936
Telegraph
Addresses, Barrow-in-Furness, Q. Mr. C. W. Cayzer; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 258
Offices
Bank Holidays, Q. Sir J. Lubbock; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1074
Number of, Qs. Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 730; *April* 9, 843
Wires, City of London, Qs. Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Alban Gibbs; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 6, 1606
Telegraphic Errors, Qs. Mr. Henniker Heaton, Sir J. Fergusson; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 2, 394
Telephone
Exchange, Q. Mr. F. F. Begg; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 1, 260
Service
England and Isle of Man, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 118
Glasgow, Qs. Mr. F. F. Begg, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1235
Guernsey, Q. Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 849
Tunbridge Wells, Q. Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 96
Telephone Service (see that Title)
Third-class Railway Tickets, Ireland, Q. Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 634. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 846
Thurles Post Office, Tipperary, Q. Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1412
Train Service, Euston and Holyhead, Q. Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1347
Trustee and Post Office Savings Banks, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 27, 1126
Tunbridge Wells, Telephone Service, Q. Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 96

Post Office Consolidation Bill
l. Read 3^{a} and Passed *Mar* 30, 1
c. Read 1^{o} *April* 29, 1249

POWELL, Sir FRANCIS S., Bart., *Wigan*
Supply: £16,000 for Science and Art Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 905

POWELL-WILLIAMS, Mr. J. (see WILLIAMS)

POWER, Mr. P. J., *Waterford, E.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1658
Business of the House (Supply): Irish Board of Works Vote *April* 30, 1352

Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill
l. 2R., Viscount Knutsford, 486; Lord Halsbury, 488 *April* 5
Read 2^{a} and com. to Com. of Whole House *April* 5, 488
In Com., Rep. without Amendt. and re-com. to Standing Com. *April* 8, 722

PRETYMAN, Captain ERNEST GEORGE, *Suffolk, Woodbridge*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1670
Chaff-cutting Machines, Accidents, Intro. *April* 1, 356

PRICE, Mr. ROBERT J., *Norfolk, E.*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1430

PRIESTLEY, Sir W. O., *Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities*
Oyster Culture *April* 8, 737, 738
Public Health (Scotland) Bill *April* 1, 315

Prime Minister (Absence Abroad)
Mr. Swift MacNeill, (*Motion for Adj. of House*) 301, 302; [Mr. Speaker, 302;] Mr. J. H. Lewis, 303; (*Motion negatived*, 303) *April* 1
(For Questions see FOREIGN OFFICE)

Prisons (see LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE)
(For Scotch and Irish Questions see under Titles SCOTLAND and IRELAND)

PROVAND, Mr. ANDREW D., *Glasgow, Blackfriars*
Private Bill Procedure, Scotland *April* 30, 1351

Public Health Acts Amendment Bill
c. Intro., Sir A. Hickman; Read 1^{o} *April* 30, 1402

Public Health (Scotland) Bill
c. 2R., Debate Resumed on Mr. Caldwell's Amendt: (*Amendt. negatived*, 303); Mr. J. Bryce, 304; Mr. J. P. Smith, 304; Mr. Graham Murray, 304, 307; Mr. J. Caldwell, 307; [Mr. Speaker, 307, 310;] Mr. J. B. Balfour, 308; Sir C. Cameron, 310 *April* 1
Read 2^{o} *April* 1, 310
Mr. Graham Murray, (*Motion to refer to Standing Com. on Law, Etc.*) 310, 313, 314; Dr. Farquharson, (*Amendt.*) 310; Mr. J. W. Crombie, 312; [Mr. Speaker, 313;] Mr. J. Caldwell, 314; Sir W. O. Priestley, 315; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 316; Mr. T. F. Halsey, 318, 319; Mr. A. Birrell, 319, 326; Mr. R. G. Webster, 320; Mr. T. R. Buchanan, 320; Mr. J. P. Smith, 321; Sir R. T. Reid, 323; Mr. C. B. Renshaw, 323; Mr. J. G. Holburn, 324; Mr. L. Courtney, 324, 326; (*Division*, 327) *April* 1
Committed to Standing Com. on Law, Etc. *April* 1, 327

Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Akers-Douglas, 327, 333; Mr. T. Lough; 327; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 327; Mr. P. O'Brien, 328; [Mr. Speaker, 328, 332; 334;] Mr. J. Daly, 328; Mr. J. Burns, 329, 330; Mr. J. J. Clancy, 330, 333; Mr. W. Allan, 331; Mr. J. P. Farrell, 332; Mr. J. Caldwell, 333; Mr. M. J. Flavin, 334 *April* 1
Read 2° *April* 1, 334
Mr. Akers-Douglas, (*Motion*) 334, 335; Mr. T. M. Healy, 334, 335; [Mr. Speaker, 335;] Mr. Vesey Knox, 335; (*Motion Agreed to*, 335) *April* 1
Committed to a Select Com. *April* 1, 335
In Com., Mr. Akers-Douglas, (*Motion for Advances*) 591; Mr. J. P. Farrell, (*Amendt.*) 591; Dr. Tanner, 591; (*Division*, 591;) Reso. to be Rep. *April* 5
Reso. Rep. and Agreed to *April* 8, 832

Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill
c. 2R., Dr. Tanner, 483; Mr. J. Atkinson, 483 *April* 2
Read 2° *April* 2, 483
In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *April* 5, 584
Read 3° and Passed *April* 5, 584
l. Read 1ª *April* 6, 593
2R., Earl of Denbigh, 1589; Lord Halsbury, 1589 *May* 6
Read 2ª, and com. to Com. of Whole House *May* 6, 1590

QUEEN'S REIGN, DIAMOND JUBILEE
Bank Holiday, *Qs.* Mr. G. J. Goschen, Jun., Mr. Swift MacNeil; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 2, 410
Ceremony at St. Paul's, *Q.* Sir E. T. Gourley; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 9, 863
Children's Holiday, *Q.* Mr. Gerald Loder; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *May* 4, 1517
Clemency of the Crown, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 533. *Q.* Mr. J. Lowles; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 4, 1517
Colonial
  Premiers, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *April* 29, 1235
  Visitors, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *May* 3, 1411
Commemoration Medal, *Q.* Mr. Hermon-Hodge; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Mar* 30, 116
Crimean Veterans, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 27, 1128
Divine Service at St. Margaret's Church, *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 30, 1350
Government Employés, *Q.* Captain Norton; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 946
Household Troops, *Q.* Mr. E. Flower; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Mar* 30, 101
Indian
  Native Infantry, *Q.* Captain Bagot; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *May* 3, 1411
  Troops, *Q.* Mr. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *April* 1, 262
Irish Militia, *Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 29, 1235
Militia Force, *Q.* Colonel Bill; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *April* 12, 945

[*cont.*

QUEEN'S REIGN, DIAMOND JUBILEE—*cont.*
Miscellaneous, *Qs.* Colonel Bill, Mr. J. F. Flannery, Captain Norton; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams, Mr. G. J. Goschen, Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 945
Naval and Military Officers, *Q.* General Laurie; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 6, 598
Paupers, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Holburn; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 1, 265
Peers and Peeresses, *Facilities for*, *Qs.* Earl Stanhope, Earl of Feversham; *As.* Viscount Cross *April* 5, 485
Royal
  Clemency to Offenders, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 533. *Q.* Mr. J. Lowles; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 4, 1517
  Irish Constabulary, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *May* 4, 1517
  Naval Reserve, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Flannery; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 12, 945
Seats
  Colonial Representatives, *for*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *May* 3, 1411
  Members of Parliament
    Procession, *Qs.* Sir E. T. Gourley, Mr. T. B. Curran, Mr. D. Crilly; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 27, 1127
    Purchase by, *Q.* Mr. G. C. T. Bartley; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *May* 6, 1594
  Middlesex Magistrates, *for*, *Q.* Mr. A. Lafone; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 6, 1594
Shabracques, *Q.* Lord Balcarres; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 746
Volunteers, *Qs.* Sir H. Havelock-Allan; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 6, 597
Yeomanry, *Q.* Viscount Galway; *A.* Marquess of Lansdowne *April* 6, 594

QUILTER, Mr. W. C., *Suffolk*, *Sudbury*
Agricultural Rating Act *April* 1, 289, 290

Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Graham Murray, 584, 585; Mr. J. Caldwell, 584, 585; Mr. J. Colville, 587; [Mr. Speaker, 587] *April* 5
Read 2° *April* 5, 587
In Com., Mr. J. Caldwell (*Amendt.*) 1058, 1059, (*Amendt.*) 1059, 1060, (*Amendt.*) 1061, (*Amendts.*) 1062, 1063, (*Amendts.*) 1064, (*Amendt.*) 1066, (*Amendt.*) 1067; [Chairman, 1058, 1059, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067]; Mr. Graham Murray, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065; (*Division*, 1059); Dr. Clark, 1060, 1065; (*Amendt. negatived*, 1060); (*Division*, 1061); Mr. H. V. Duncombe, 1061, 1062, 1067; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1061, 1068; (*Divisions*, 1062, 1063); Mr. Sydney Gedge, 1063; (*Divisions*, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067) *April* 12
Rep. without Amendt. *April* 12, 1068
3R., Mr. Graham Murray, 1068; Dr. Clark (*Amendt.*) 1068; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1068; (*Division*, 1068) *April* 12
Read 3° and Passed *April* 12, 1068
l. Read 1ª *May* 3, 1405
(For Questions see SCOTLAND)

RAILWAYS
- *Accident*
  - *Platelayers to, Great Northern, Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1350
  - *Potter's Lane, Wednesbury, Q.* Mr. Walford Green; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 749
  - *Romford Station, Q.* Mr. L. Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 734
- *Carriages, Overcrowding, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1349; *May* 3, 1407
- *Great*
  - *Eastern, Overcrowding, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1407
  - *Northern, Accident to Platelayers, Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1350
- *Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Ireland*
  - *Light Railways* (see sub-head *Light Railways* below)
  - *Portumna, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 119
  - *State Purchase of, Q.* Mr. J. J. Shee; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 1, 297
  - *Third-class Tickets, Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 634. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 846
  - *Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore, Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Colonel Waring, Mr. A. O'Connor, Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 628. *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. D. P. Barton; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 756 *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 856
- *Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill* (see that Title)
- *Light Railways, Ireland, Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 5, 531. *Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Major Jameson; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 848
- *London and North Western, Death of a Fireman, Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 615
- *London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Metropolitan and Metropolitan District, Overcrowding, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 512. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1070. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1227
- *Midland Railway Company, Q.* Mr. W. G. Mount; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 289
- *Mombasa, Q.* Colonel Williams; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 8, 728
- *Overcrowding Carriages*
  - *Committee of Inquiry, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1349
  - *Great Eastern, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1407

[*cont.*

RAILWAYS—cont.
- *Overcrowding Carriages*—cont.
  - *Metropolitan and Metropolitan District, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 512. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1070. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 29, 1227
- *Portumna, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Mar* 30, 119
- *Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill, Q.* Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Mr. Speaker *April* 26, 1077
  (For Debate see that Title)
- *Third Class Tickets, Ireland, Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 634. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 846
- *Train Service, Euston and Holyhead, Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 30, 1347
- *Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore, Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Colonel Waring, Mr. A. O'Connor, Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 628. *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. E. H. Carson, Mr. D. P. Barton; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 756. *Qs.* Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 856
- *Waterloo and City, Qs.* Sir H. Vincent, Mr. C. E. Schwann, Mr. J. Lowther; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1342
- *Workmen's Trains, Q.* Captain Norton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 619

RANFURLY, EARL OF (Lord in Waiting)
- Land Commission
  - Assistant Commissioners *April* 2, 383
  - Rules *April* 1, 257

RASCH, Major F. C., *Essex, S.E.*
- Army Deserters *Mar* 30, 116
- Cavalry Regiments *April* 6, 620
- Speeches
  - House of Commons, in the *April* 6, 595
  - Parliament, in *April* 26, 1069

REDMOND, Mr. JOHN E., *Waterford City*
- Agricultural Rating Act, 1896 *May* 6, 1610
- Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, 1R. *April* 12, 1044, 1045
- Business of the House (Supply), Irish Board of Works Vote *April* 30, 1352
- Naval Expenditure *April* 2, 411, 412
- Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 6, 628, 629; *April* 8, 756, 757; *April* 9, 856

Regular and Elders' Widows' Fund Bill
- *c.* Read 2° *April* 5, 584
  - In Com., Reso. for Contribution Agreed to *April* 12, 1056
  - Reso. Rep. and Agreed to *April* 26, 1119
  - In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *April* 26, 1119
  - Read 3° and Passed *April* 26, 1119
- *l.* Read 1ª *May* 3, 1045

REID, Sir R. T., *Dumfries Burghs*
Crete *April* 12, 972
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 323
Supply
  £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1375, 1380
  £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1371
  £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1364, 1367

RENSHAW, Mr. C. B., *Renfrewshire*
Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 323
Troops in India, Beer Supply *April* 2, 399

RENTOUL, Mr. J. A., *Down, E.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1649

RICHARDS, Mr. H. C., *Finsbury, E.*
Budget *April* 29, 1303
Mayflower, Log of *April* 27, 1135
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1489

RICKETT, Mr. J. COMPTON, *Scarborough*
Dublin Corporation Bill, 3R. *Mar* 30, 92

RIDLEY, RIGHT HON. SIR MATTHEW WHITE, BART. (Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Lancashire, N., Blackpool*
Betting "Places," Hawke *v.* Dunn *April* 29, 1226
Bottling Beer *April* 26, 1069; *May* 3, 1410
Brixton Prison *April* 12, 949
Business of the House *May* 6, 1617
Employers' Liability Act, East Lancashire Paper Mill Co. *April* 12, 929
Experiments on Living Animals *April* 29, 1228; *May* 6, 1604
Folding of Newspapers *May* 3, 1410
Highway Robberies, London *April* 12, 951
Holidays, Prison Warders *April* 8, 734
Immigrants, East London *April* 29, 1237
Juvenile Prisoners *May* 3, 1411
Liverpool Docks, Loading Accidents *April* 12, 945
Medical Inspectorship of Prisons *April* 27, 1137
Metropolitan
  Metropolitan District and, Railways Overcrowding *April* 29, 1228
  Police
    Boots *April* 6, 618
    Courts (Holidays) Bill, Intro. *May* 6, 1617
Middlesex County Council *April* 12, 949
Midland Railway Company *April* 1, 289
Nitro-glycerine Factory, Anglesey *April* 8, 755
Prisoners
  Juvenile *May* 3, 1411
  Release of, Queen's Reign *May* 4, 1518
Prisons
  Brixton *April* 12, 949
  Medical Inspectorship of *April* 27, 1137
  Vans, Counties *Mar* 30, 107
  Warders
    Holidays *April* 8, 734
    Superannuation *April* 1, 296
Private Bill Procedure *May* 4, 1519
[*cont.*

RIDLEY, Right Hon. Sir M. W.—*cont.*
Privilege Cabs *April* 8, 753
Queen's Reign,
  Jubilee Procession *May* 6, 1594
  Release of Prisoners *May* 4, 1518
Secondary Education *April* 1, 283
Strike at Norwich, Intimidation *May* 6, 1593
Supply
  £41,107 for Metropolitan Police, Pay and Expenses *April* 30, 1383
  £420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and Colonies *April* 30, 1384, 1386, 1391, 1392
  £126,130 for Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain) *April* 30, 1396
Vaccination Acts *April* 1, 284
Welsh Land Commission, Report *April* 8, 752
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1421, 1427, 1430, 1432, 1433, 1437, 1458, 1480, 1489, 1491, 1492

RIPON, Marquess of
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 51, 57, 58, 59

RITCHIE, RIGHT HON. CHARLES T. (President of the Board of Trade), *Croydon*
Accident to Platelayers, Great Northern Railway *April* 30, 1350
Business of the House *April* 27, 1141
Daunt's Rock Lightship *April* 2, 388
Dublin Electric Tramways *April* 2, 403
Gas Poisoning, Alleged *April* 1, 262
Great Eastern Railway *May* 3, 1407
Light Dues on Shipping *April* 1, 292, 293
Lighthouse, Tiumpan Head *April* 27, 1126
Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill, 2R. *May* 3, 1492, 1499
Railway Carriages, Overcrowding *April* 30, 1349
Steamship *Darwin May* 3, 1419
Thames Conservancy Bye-laws *April* 29, 1239
Waterloo and City Railway *April* 30, 1343

ROBERTS, Mr. J. HERBERT, *Denbigh, W.*
Accounts Office, India *May* 6, 1595
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 773, 774
British Steamer Stopped at Syra *April* 29, 1237
Crete *Mar* 30, 111, 112; *April* 29, 1239
Crown Lands and Commons, Wales *April* 26, 1069
Education, Wales *May* 4, 1514
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1087
Tokat Massacre *April* 12, 947
Voluntary Schools Bill *April* 5, 535
Welsh Land Commission, Report *April* 8, 752

ROBERTSON, Mr. EDMUND, *Dundee*
Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 766, 767
Budget *April* 29, 1319, 1322
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 125

ROBSON, Mr. W. S., *South Shields*
Business of the House *April* 27, 1140
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1491

Roche, Hon. James B. B., *Kerry, E.*
British Columbia *May* 4, 1523
Canadian Tariff *May* 6, 1599

Roche, Mr. John, *Galway, E.*
Land Commision, Ireland *April* 12, 927

Round, Mr. James, *Essex, Harwich*
Swine Fever, Essex *April* 12, 955

Royal Commissions
Crofters (see Scotland)
Irish Land (see Ireland)
London Water Supply (see Local Government Board)
North Sea Fisheries (see Merchant Shipping)
Pacific Cable (see Colonies)
Patriotic (see Army)
Vaccination (see that Title)

Russell, General F. S., *Cheltenham*
Army Manœuvres *April* 29, 1232, 1233
East India, Officers of General List *April* 27, 1162
Illegal Trawling, Moray Firth *April* 29, 1231

RUSSELL, Mr. T. W. (Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Tyrone, S.*
Agricultural Rating Act, 1896 *May* 6, 1610
Death of Workhouse Inmate, City of London *May* 6, 1613
Local Government Board *April* 2, 451
Local Officers' Superannuation Bill *April* 6, 634
Parish Councils *May* 6, 1606
Plague, Indian Transport *Dilwara April* 30, 1346
Plumbers' Registration Bill, 2R. *April* 30, 1403
Vaccination, Royal Commission *April* 30, 1341; *May* 6, 1592

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill
c. 2R., Mr. Tomlinson *April* 5, 592

Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. Seton-Karr; Read 1° *Mar* 30, 128

Samuel, Mr. J., *Stockton-on-Tees*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1432

Saunderson, Colonel E. J., *Armagh, N.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1688, 1689
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 171, 173

School Board for London (Elections) Bill
c. 2R., Sir J. Blundell Maple, 1205; Sir J. Lubbock, (*Amendt.*) 1206, 1211; Mr. E. B. Hoare, 1210; Mr. J. Stuart, 1211; Colonel Hughes, 1212; Mr. A. O'Connor, 1213; Mr. Sydney Gedge, 1214; Mr. L. Courtney, 1215; Sir J. Gorst, 1218; (*Division*, 1219) *April* 28
2R. negatived *April* 28, 1219

Schools
Accommodation
Heywood, Q. Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 949
Voluntary, Qs. Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844; *April* 30, 1343
Army Schoolmasters, Q. Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1593
Berriew School Bill (see that Title)
Boards
Elections, Scotland, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 5, 513
Necessitous
Districts, Qs. Sir C. Dilke, Mr. E. Gray; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 759
School Bill, Q. Mr. A. H. D. Acland; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 6, 631
North Mundham, Sussex, Q. Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 1, 260
Poor Districts, Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 8, 760
Working Balance, Q. Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 854
Holy Trinity Church, Gray's Inn Road, Q. Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Grant Lawson *May* 3, 1406
Inspectors, Scotland, Q. Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 12, 954
Irish National (see Ireland)
Model, Ireland, Qs. Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *April* 9, 840
National, Sulgrave, Northamptonshire, Qs. Mr. F. A. Channing; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 939
Roman Catholic
Belfast, Q. Mr. F. B. Mildmay; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 943
Scotland, Q. Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 26, 1075
School Board for London (Elections) Bill (see that Title)
Schoolmasters, Army, Q. Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 6, 1593
Voluntary
Accommodation, Qs. Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 9, 844; *April* 30, 1343
Applications for Relief, Qs. Mr. E. Bainbridge, Mr. J. C. Williams; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 956
Board and, Grants, Q. Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 29, 1245
Voluntary Schools Act, Qs. Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 26, 1073
Voluntary Schools Bill
Associations, Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *April* 5, 535
Halsbury, Lord (Personal Explanation) April 6, 595
(For Debates see Title of Bill)

Schwann, Mr. C. E., *Manchester, N.*
- Parcel Post, Great Britain and Brazil *April* 2, 404
- Post Office Service *April* 30, 1344
- Venezuela *April* 5, 525
- Waterloo and City Railway *April* 30, 1343

SCOTLAND

Secretary for—Lord Balfour
Lord Advocate—Mr. A. Graham Murray
Solicitor General—Mr. C. Scott Dickson

- *Artillery, Volunteer, Position Batteries, Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 522
- *Autumn Manœuvres, Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *A.* Mr. Brodrick *May* 4, 1522
- *Carloway Road, Lewis, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 6, 630; *April* 29, 1234
- *Channel Fleet, Q.* Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 2, 401. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 5, 512
- *Congested Districts, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 29, 1247
- *Constabulary, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1515
- *County Councillors' Travelling Expenses (Scotland)* (see that Title)
- *Crofters' Commission Report, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 3, 1419
- *Cromarty Firth, Anchorage, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 9, 843
- *Deportation of Paupers to Ireland, Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 5, 522
- *Edinburgh University Library, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1227
- *Edinburgh University (Transfer of Patronage) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Education in, Q.* Mr. J. Bryce; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1530
- *Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Act, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 6, 599
- *Fishery*
  - *Board, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1518
  - *Cruiser Vigilant, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1345
- *Glasgow, Telephone Service, Qs.* Mr. F. F. Begg, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1235
- *Glebe of Kintail (Foreshore,) Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 728
- *Herring Brand Fees, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Marray *May* 3, 1408
- *Illegal Trawling*
  - *Danish Waters, Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1523
  - *Lewis, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1070
  - *Moray Firth, in the, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1077. *Qs.* General Russell, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1231. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1349

[*cont.*

SCOTLAND—cont.
- *Illegal Trawling*—cont.
  - *Scottish Waters, in, Qs.* Captain Pirie, Mr. Hedderwick; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 735. *Qs.* Mr. R. B. Haldane, Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 838. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *April* 27, 1126
- *Income Tax, Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 8, 731
- *Inspector of Poor, Kiltearn, Ross-shire, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 729
- *Inverness-shire Water Supply, Causer, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 843
- *Justices of the Peace, Q.* Sir T. D. Gibson-Carmichael; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1520
- *Lewis*
  - *Carloway Road, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 6, 630; *April* 29, 1234
  - *Illegal Trawling, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1070
  - *Piers, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 855. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. H. T. Anstruther *April* 27, 1128
  - *Port Ness* Harbour, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 840
  - *Postal Facilities, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1243
- *Lighthouses*
  - *Foghorns and, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 599
  - *Tiumpan Head, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1126
- *Local Government Board for Scotland, Reports, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1243. *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 4, 1518
- *Military Camp*
  - *Defence, of, Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk), Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 402
  - *Training, for, Q.* Mr. Munro Ferguson; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 1, 265
- *Moray Firth, Illegal Trawling in, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 26, 1077. *Qs.* General Russell, Sir C. Cameron; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 29, 1231. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1349
- *Mussel Beds, Qs.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 862; *May* 3, 1408
- *Parish Councils*
  - *Marnock, Banffshire, Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 739
  - *Post Office Guarantees, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 513
- *Piers, Lewis, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 855. *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. H. T. Anstruther *April* 27, 1128
- *Police in Counties, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 8, 729
- *Port Ness Harbour, Lewis, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir, *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 840
- *Post Office Extensions, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 3, 1410
- *Prisons, Q.* Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Mar* 30, 105

[*cont.*

SCOTLAND—cont.
- *Private Bill Procedure*, *Q.* Mr. W. Thorburn; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 6, 638. *Q.* Mr. A. D. Provand; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 30, 1351
- *Privileges of Members of Parliament*, *Q.* Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *May* 6, 1598
- *Public Health (Scotland) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Queen's Reign, Diamond Jubilee, Paupers*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Holburn; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 1, 265
- *Railway Assessors (Scotland) Superannuation Bill*, *Q.* Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Mr. Speaker *April* 26, 1077
  (For Debate see that Title)
- *Recruits, 3rd Battalion Light Infantry and Scottish Rifles*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 2, 401
- *Roman Catholic Schools*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 26, 1075
- *School*
  - *Board Elections*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 5, 513
  - *Inspectors*, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 12, 954
- *Science and Art Grants*, *Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 30, 1342
- *Tiumpan Head Lighthouse*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1126
- *Trawling* (see subhead *Illegal Trawling* above)
- *Volunteer Artillery, Position Batteries*, *Q.* Sir C. Cameron; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *April* 5, 522
- *Votes and Grants for Local Purposes* (see that Title)
- *Water Supply, Causer, Inverness-shire*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *April* 9, 843
- *Weighing Cattle*, *Q.* Mr. A. Birrell; *A.* Mr. W. Long *April* 9, 863

Scott-Montagu, Hon. John (see Montagu)

Seale-Hayne, Right Hon. C., *Devon, Ashburton*
- Allotments, Devon *April* 6, 624

Service Franchise Bill

c. 2R., Mr. H. H. Marks, 1181; Sir C. Dilke, (*Amendt.*) 1185, 1186, 1202; Sir J. Blundell Maple, 1186, 1189, 1193; Captain Norton, 1188; Mr. R. McKenna, 1191, 1192, 1193; Mr. R. Ascroft, 1194; Mr. D. Lloyd-George, 1196; Captain Jessel, 1196; Sir R. Finlay, 1197; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1199; Colonel Hughes, 1201; Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1202; (*Amendt. withdrawn*, 1202). Main Question Put and Agreed to *April* 28
- Read 2° *April* 28, 1202
- Mr. H. H. Marks, (*Motion*) 1202, 1205; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1202; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1203; Mr. J. Stuart, 1203; Mr. A. O'Connor, 1203; Sir H. Fowler, 1203; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1204; (*Motion withdrawn*, 1205) *April* 28
- Committed to Com. of Whole House *April* 28, 1205

[*cont.*

Service Franchise Bill—cont.
- On the Order for going into Committee: Mr. Vesey Knox, (*Instruction to Com.*, 1510); [Mr. Speaker ruled the Instruction out of Order and the House proceeded to Committee] *May* 3, 1510
- In Com., Dr. Tanner, (*Motion*) 1511; Sir J. Blundell Maple, 1511; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1511; R.P. *May* 3

Seton-Karr, Mr. H., *St. Helens*
- Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill, Intro. *May* 4, 1531
- Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 642, 657, 658; *May* 4, 1519
- Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill, Intro. *Mar* 30, 128
- Seal Life, North Pacific *Mar* 30, 109

Shadwell, Mr. W. Lucas- (see Lucas-Shadwell)

Shaw, Mr. Thomas, *Hawick Burghs*
- British South Africa Company *April* 6, 637

Shee, Mr. J. J., *Waterford, W.*
- Distress, Ireland *April* 2, 397
- Labourers (Ireland) Acts *April* 1, 271; *April* 2, 398
- Land
  - Commission, Ireland *April* 2, 389, 391, 392
  - Purchase, Ireland *April* 1, 269, 270
- Loans, Ireland *April* 5, 536
- Local Loans Stock *April* 1, 270, 271
- Lunatic Asylums, Ireland *April* 2, 399
- Postal Delivery, Grange, Youghal *May* 3, 1414
- Railways, Ireland *April* 1, 297
- Technical Education *April* 1, 270

Sidebotham, Mr. J. W., *Cheshire, Hyde*
- Post Office, Hyde *April* 26, 1071

Simeon, Sir J. S. Barrington, Bart., *Southampton*
- Supply: £132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom *April* 9, 911, 912

Sinclair, Mr. Louis, *Essex, Romford*
- Railway Accident, Romford Station *April* 8, 734

Smith, Hon. W. F. Danvers, *Westminster, Strand*
- London Water Supply, Royal Commission *Mar* 30, 98

Smith, Mr. J. Parker, *Lanark, Partick*
- Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 698
- Cape Colony, Vaal Drifts *April* 12, 956
- Local Authorities (Scotland) Loans Bill, Intro. *April* 27, 1141
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 304, 321

SMITH, Mr. SAMUEL, *Flintshire*
Liverpool Docks, Loading Accidents *April* 12, 945
Massacre at Eghin *April* 8, 750
Prisons, Scotland *Mar* 30, 105

South Metropolitan Gas Bill
l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

South Yorkshire Junction Railway Bill
l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

Speaker, Mr.

THE RIGHT HON.
WILLIAM COURT GULLY, Q.C.,
Carlisle

Questions
The hon. Member is replying to the answer which has been given and arguing upon it *April* 1, 279
If the hon. Member persists so frequently in continuing to ask questions after I have risen and ruled them out of order, I shall have to call the attention of the House to the matter *April* 1, 280
Questions put merely for the purpose of satire are not in order *April* 1, 285
The Question which the hon. Gentleman is asking does not arise out of the Question on the Paper *April* 5, 530
The hon. Gentleman must take the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as to what his answer really was *April* 6, 619
The right hon. Gentleman has said that he is not in a position to answer the Question *April* 12, 956

Rules and Order of Debate
I could not accept that Motion. The Chief Secretary has stated his views as a private Member, and for the hon. Member, after the Debate has begun to draw to a close, to move the Adjournment of the Debate in order to allow the right hon. Member to have the opportunity of reconsidering his views would be an abuse of the Rules of the House *Mar* 30, 93
I have no business to consider what action will be taken on the subsequent clauses. I can only say that this Motion for an Adjournment is an abuse of the Rules of the House *Mar* 30, 93
I cannot see that the observations of the hon. Member are relevant to the Amendment before the House, which relates only to the Financial Relations between England and Ireland, and not to the question how Ireland is to be improved *Mar* 30, 160
It will be my duty, assuming that the Motion, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," be defeated, to put the Question, "That those words be there inserted." If any Debate arise that Question cannot be put unless the Closure be moved and carried *Mar* 31, 242

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.
Rules and Order of Debate—cont.
The question of the division of rates has been disposed of by the decision of the House on the Amendment, and that cannot be discussed again *April* 1, 307
The question of what employment will be given on the building has nothing to do with the purchase of the site *April* 1, 332.
That is not relevant to the matter under discussion. The hon. Member is entitled to make his protest, but he cannot go into foreign questions *April* 1, 334
I must ask the hon. Gentleman to withdraw the expression. It is a most improper expression to use *April* 1, 336
The Secretary to the Treasury was explaining a Treasury Bill, and the hon. Member interrupted him and said it was a Treasury swindle. That is a most improper expression *April* 1, 336
Whatever the hon. Member meant, it was an improper expression to use, and I hope he will withdraw it *April* 1, 336
The hon. Gentleman made use of the expression, while the Secretary to the Treasury was speaking, and if it were nothing else it was a disorderly interruption. I must ask him to withdraw the expression *April* 1, 337
I think that Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House. I have the alternative of either refusing it, or taking an immediate Division upon it, and I adopt the latter course *April* 1, 345
The Bill has been before the Examiners, and they have certified that on all those matters of which they have cognisance the Standing Orders have been complied with. Therefore it is ripe for Second Reading *April* 1, 346
I think the Amendment is not in order. This is a Motion which must be made according to the regular practice of the House in the case of a public Bill which seeks private Bill powers *April* 1, 347
This is not done in lieu of sending the Bill to the Standing Committee. This is a proceeding which the ordinary practice of the House provides in order that persons whose private rights are affected may have an opportunity of appearing and being heard. After the Bill has been before the Committee, it will come back for consideration by a Committee of the whole House. *April* 1, 349
The use of the word "alleged" is improper if it were used in the sense, as it seemed to me that it was, of suggesting that something stated by the right hon. Gentleman was not true. As to the word "fraud" in connection with the Treasury such words are extremely objectionable in Debate; but, unless they amount to a specific personal allegation against an hon. Member, they are hardly out of order. The action of the Government, as a whole, can be denounced in much

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

stronger language than can be used about an individual Member of the House. But the hon. and learned Member goes extremely near the line *April* 1, 352

That is not in question upon this Bill, which is only a Superannuation Bill. There is no question as to who shall pay the salary or who shall appoint *April* 5, 587

The Bill was referred to a Select Committee, in accordance with the invariable practice of the House where private Bill powers are sought by a public Bill *April* 5, 590

That Motion is not one for the nomination, but for the appointment, of the Committee. The nomination will be subsequently moved *April* 5, 590

The hon. Member is not keeping to the question before the House. The question of the effect of Protection upon the agricultural labourer is not the question before the House *April* 6, 664

This Bill was passed by a very large majority last Session, and a Motion to refer it to a Select Committee was defeated by the operation of the Half-past Five o'clock Rule. It has been very fully discussed this afternoon, and, therefore, I think I am justified in now accepting the Motion *April* 7, 710

I must point out that the merits of the scheme cannot be discussed. The only question which can properly be raised is whether an irregularity should be put right, and that without reference to whether the scheme is a good or a bad scheme *April* 8, 762

This is a Bill for the purpose of removing an irregularity, and of giving the House an opportunity of discussing the merits of the scheme on a future day *April* 8, 767

I have not referred to "Hansard," and do not know in what context or under what circumstances those observations were made; but, having fully considered this Bill—I do not know whether it is the same Bill—I am clearly of opinion that the merits of the scheme cannot be discussed *April* 8, 767

The hon. Member cannot, after my ruling, proceed to argue on the merits of the scheme by quotation from, and comment on, an article in a periodical *April* 8, 774

Perhaps I had better state first my recollection of what actually did take place at the last Sitting of the House. The Bill referred to passed through Committee after a discussion of some two hours, and when I came into the Chair, the Motion was made "That the Bill be now read the Third time." No objection was taken on the point of order to the Third Reading, but the hon. Member for Caithness immediately rose in his place, and proceeded to move that the Bill be read a Third time that day six months.

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

An hon. Member, in supporting that Amendment, did object, not by way of raising a question of order, but as a matter of argument, to the Third Reading being taken the same night of a Bill which, he said, was a contentious Bill. Therefore the particular point which the right hon. Gentleman now takes was never raised. But as the right hon. Gentleman asks me what my ruling would have been, assuming objection had been taken, I may say that I do not understand the Rule to be as broad as he seems to suggest. There is no absolute Rule that the Third Reading cannot be taken immediately after the Report without the universal assent of the House. It is the more ordinary practice of the House—which, probably, it would desire to continue in the majority of cases—that only one stage should be taken at a time; and, in the case of a really contentious Bill, debated between the two sides of the House, two stages should not be taken at the same Sitting. With regard to the ruling to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, in which Mr. Speaker Peel gave an opinion that it was not a question of leave like the withdrawing of a Motion, but of the vote of the House, I think that correctly states what is the Rule of the House. If the question be proposed and objection be raised, the House then has the right to determine whether it will take the Third Reading or not. I do not think that that question has been pressed against objection taken, except in cases where there has been something exceptional in the extent or character of the opposition. The decision of Mr. Speaker Peel seems to me to have carefully laid down what the Rule is; and I may point out that since then, as lately as June 2, 1892, when the Clergy Discipline Immorality Bill was before the House, and when there was no urgency, there was a Debate on the Report stage, and several Amendments were moved and Divisions taken by a minority limited in number. After the conclusion of the Report stage, the Third Reading of the Bill was asked for. The question was put, and there was a Division, when the question was carried by 135 to 14 votes. And there are other precedents. As regards the other point raised—namely, that the particular Resolution under which the House sat upon that Monday prevented the proceedings of which the right hon. Gentleman complained—I may point out that that Rule did not prevent anything from being done which could in ordinary circumstances have been done under the Order for the Committee on the Bill. If there had been no such Resolution on that Order being called, and the Committee stage taken, and Report made without amendment, the Third Reading might have been moved and taken. There was, therefore, nothing

[*cont.*

[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

in the Resolution which could prevent the House from disposing of all business which could under ordinary circumstances have been dealt with under that particular Order of the Day. For these reasons I think that the proceedings were in order *April* 26, 1079

The Question put by the hon. Member on the paper called my particular attention to the terms of the Standing Order, and on consideration of them I have come to the conclusion that a vote of the House taken under that Standing Order is not a Division. [*Cheers.*] The Standing Order provides that the Speaker or Chairman, after calling on the Ayes and Noes to rise in their places, shall "either declare the determination of the House or name Tellers for a Division, and, in case there is no Division, shall declare to the House or Committee the number of the minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall be thereupon taken down in the House and printed with the list of Divisions." The effect appears to me that it is a vote of the House, the result of which is declared from the Chair without any Division. It is a technical point, but that, I think, is the effect of the Standing Order. The Standing Order no doubt requires that the names of those who voted in the minority shall be printed with the list of Divisions, but such record ought not to be numbered or reckoned as a Division. [*Cheers.*] I shall give directions that in future the practice of printing it as a Division be discontinued *April* 29, 1248

The Bill relates to the Service Franchise only, whilst the Instruction proposes to alter another Franchise, and it is therefore outside the scope of the Bill *May* 3, 1510

The only question before us is the alleged inequality in the treatment of Ireland in the matter of agricultural rating. It seems to me that the hon. Member is now arguing a much wider question *May* 6, 1626

Miscellaneous Rulings

Mar 30, 122, 123; *Mar* 31, 245; *April* 1, 267, 278, 280, 282, 287, 290, 302, 310, 313, 328, 336, 343, 347, 350, 353; *April* 2, 393, 409, 412, 414, 453; *April* 5, 515, 535, 590; *April* 6, 630; *April* 8, 726, 736, 751; 763, 764, 765; *April* 9, 858, 919; *April* 12, 1031; *April* 26, 1120; *April* 27, 1134; *May* 3, 1505, 1506; *May* 6, 1606, 1609, 1610

Speeches in the House of Commons

Major Rasch, (*Notices of Motion*) *April* 6, 595; *April* 26, 1069

SPENCER, Earl
Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 379
Military Works Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 496
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 16, 20, 35; In Com. *April* 2, 366

SPICER, Mr. A., *Monmouth Boroughs*
Budget *April* 29, 1306

STANHOPE, Earl
Estate Duty, Pictures and Works of Art *April* 2, 357, 360
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 5, 485
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 61

STANHOPE, Hon. P. J., *Burnley*
Crete *April* 12, 997

STANLEY, LORD (Lord Commissioner of the Treasury), *Lancashire, S.E., Westhoughton*
House of Commons, Sale of Intoxicants *April* 9, 837
Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 920

STEVENSON, Mr. F. S., *Suffolk, Eye*
Burial Ground, Debenham, Suffolk *April* 6, 607
Crete *Mar* 30, 110; *April* 8, 749; *April* 12, 1002, 1006; *April* 27, 1132, 1133

Stipendiary Magistrates' Jurisdiction (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Graham Murray; Read 1° *April* 12, 957

STUART, Mr. JAMES, *Shoreditch, Hoxton*
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board *Mar* 30, 108
East London Water Company *April* 8, 727
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 566
School Board for London (Elections) Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1211
Service Franchise Bill, 2R. *April* 28, 1203

STUART-WORTLEY, Right Hon. C. B. (see WORTLEY)

Sunday Bill [H.L.]
l. Pres., Lord Hobhouse; Read 1ª *May* 4, 1513

Sunday Closing Bill
c. Intro., Mr. C. E. Tritton; Read 1° *April* 9, 866

SUPPLY

CIVIL SERVICE AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

£25,000 for Admiralty, Extension of Buildings
In Com., Mr. J. H. Lewis, 900; Sir J. Leng, 900; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 901. Vote Agreed to, 902 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1122

£16,000 for Arts and Science Buildings (Great Britain)
In Com., Mr. T. Lough, 904; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 905; Sir F. S. Powell, 905; Mr. J. Burns, 906, 908; Mr. J. Caldwell, 906; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 907. Vote Agreed to, 908 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1123

£21,954 for Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum
In Com., Vote Agreed to *April* 30, 1398. Report *May* 3, 1507

£23,071 for County Courts, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. C. Harrison, 1375; Sir R. T. Reid, 1375, 1380; Sir C. Dilke, 1376; Sir R. Webster, 1377; Sir C. Cameron, (*Amendt.*) 1378; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1378; Mr. Brynmor Jones, 1379, 1380; Mr. W. Ambrose, 1379; (*Division*, 1380). Vote Agreed to, 1380 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1506

£3,350 for Crofters' Commission, Establishment Expenses
In Com., Vote Agreed to *April* 30, 1398. Report *May* 3, 1507

£16,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings
In Com., General Laurie, 908; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 908, 909; Mr. A. O'Connor, 908; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 909; Sir H. Vincent, 909. Vote Agreed to, 909 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1123

£28,961 for General Register House Offices (Edinburgh), Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Vote Agreed to *April* 30, 1398. Report *May* 3, 1507

£23,000 for the Houses of Parliament, Buildings
In Com., Mr. Gibson Bowles, 890; Dr. Farquharson, 890, 893; Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell, 891; Mr. H. Labouchere, 891; Sir H. Howorth, 892; Mr. T. Lough, 892; Mr. J. Burns, 893; Dr. Tanner, 893, 895, (*Amendts.*) 899; Mr. J. G. Weir, 893; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 894, 899; [Chairman, 894;] Mr. J. Caldwell, 894, 899;

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—cont.

£23,000 for the Houses of Parliament, Buildings— cont.
Mr. J. C. Williams, 895; Mr. J. Lowles, 895; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 895, 898; Sir W. Lawson, 898; (*Amendts. negatived*, 899, 900). Vote Agreed to, 900 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1122

£5,177 for Land Registry Office, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. R. M. Haldane, 1369, 1372, 1373; [Chairman, 1369, 1370;] Mr. G. Lambert, 1369, 1370, 1373; Sir R. Webster, 1370; Sir R. T. Reid, 1371; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1372; Mr. Sydney Gedge, 1373; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 1374; Mr. W. Ambrose, 1374; Mr. A. Hopkinson, 1374. Vote Agreed to, 1374 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1506

£62,630 for Law Charges and Courts of Law (Scotland), Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Vote Agreed to *April* 30, 1398. Report *May* 3, 1507

£43,177 for Law Officers' Department, Salaries, etc.
In Com., Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, (*Amendt.*) 1353; Sir R. Webster, 1356; Sir H. Fowler, 1358; (*Amendt. withdrawn*, 1358). Vote Agreed to, 1358 *April* 30
Report: Dr. Tanner, 1506; [Mr. Speaker, 1506] *May* 3
Reso. Agreed to *May* 3, 1506

£41,107 Metropolitan Police, Pay and Expenses
In Com., Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, (*Amendt.*) 1382; Sir Matthew White Ridley, 1383, 1384; (*Amendt. withdrawn*, 1384); Lord H. Cecil, 1384; Dr. Farquharson, 1384. Vote Agreed to, 1384 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1507

£39,000 for Miscellaneous Legal Buildings (Great Britain)
In Com., Mr. J. H. Lewis, 902; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 902, 904; Mr. J. Caldwell, 902, 903; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 903; Sir B. W. Foster, 903. Vote Agreed to, 904 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1123

£22,300 for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses
In Com., Sir H. Fowler, 1358, 1360; Mr. Hanbury, 1358, 1359; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1358, 1359; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 1359, 1360. Vote Agreed to, 1360 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1506

£3,400 for Police Courts (London and Sheerness), Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. C. Harrison, 1381, 1382; [Chairman, 1381, 1382]. Vote Agreed to, 1382 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1506

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—cont.

£420,851 for Prisons in England, Wales, and the Colonies, Expenses
In Com., Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, (*Amendt.*) 1385; Sir Matthew White Ridley, 1386, 1391, 1392; (*Amendt. withdrawn,* 1388); Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell, 1388; General Goldsworthy, 1388, 1392; Mr. A. O'Connor, 1389, 1392; Viscount Cranborne, 1390; Mr. W. O. Clough, 1391. Vote Agreed to, 1392 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1507

£52,277 for Prisons (Scotland)
In Com., Mr. R. Wallace (Perth), 1398; Dr. Farquharson, 1399; Mr. Graham Murray, 1399. Vote Agreed to, 1401 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1507

£159,100 for Public Buildings (Great Britain)
In Com., Admiral Field, 869; [Chairman, 870]. Vote Agreed to, 870 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1121

£126,130 for Reformatory, Industrial, and Day Industrial Schools (Great Britain)
In Com., Admiral Field, 1393, 1397; Sir C. Cameron, 1394; Sir Matthew White Ridley, 1396. Vote Agreed to, 1397 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1507

£238,000 for Revenue Department Buildings (Great Britain)
In Com., Mr. J. Caldwell, 866, 868; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 867, 869; Mr. J. G. Weir, 868. Vote Agreed to, 869 *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1121

£22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House
In Com., Mr. J. G. Weir, (*Amendt.*) 870, (*Amendt.*) 872, 873; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 870, 872, 873; (*Amendt. withdrawn,* 870); Mr. T. W. Legh, 870; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 871; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 871, 873; Sir H. Howorth, 871; Dr. Farquharson, 872; (*Amendt. withdrawn,* 873): Mr. J. Caldwell, 873; [Chairman, 873]. Vote Agreed to, 873 *April* 9
Report: Mr. J. Caldwell, 1122; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 1122. *April* 26
Reso. Agreed to *April* 26, 1122

£70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens
In Com., Mr. J. Caldwell, 873, 879, 887, 890; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 875, 886; Mr. F. G. Banbury, 875; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 875, 887; Sir H. Howorth, 876; Mr. J. G. Weir, 876; Mr. Munro Ferguson, 877; Mr. T. Lough, 878, (*Amendt.*) 886;

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—cont.

£70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens—cont.
Mr. C. B. B. McLaren, 878; Mr. Akers-Douglas, 879, 886, 889, 890; Mr. J. Burns, 883, 884, 887, 888, 889; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 884; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 887; (*Division,* 887); [Chairman, 888;] Mr. H. J. Gladstone, 888; Dr. Tanner, 889. Original Questions Agreed to, 890. *April* 9. Report *April* 26, 1122

£204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature, Salaries and Expenses
In Com., Mr. T. Lough, 1360; Mr. R. B. Haldane, 1360, 1364; Mr. C. Harrison, 1361; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1361, 1368, (*Amendt.*) 1368, 1369; Sir R. Webster, 1362, 1365; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 1364; Sir R. T. Reid, 1364, 1367; Sir H. Fowler, 1365; Mr. E. H. Carson, 1366; Mr. Sydney Gedge, 1367, 1368; [Chairman, 1367, 1368;] Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1369; (*Amendt. withdrawn,* 1369). Vote Agreed to, 1369 *April* 30. Report *May* 3, 1506

£132,291 for Survey of the United Kingdom
In Com., Mr. T. M. Healy, 909, 912; Sir J. S. B. Simeon, 911, 912; Mr. J. Dillon, 912, 918; Captain Bethell, 913; Mr. J. Caldwell, 913; Mr. T. Lough, 914; Major Jameson, 915; Mr. J. Burns, 915; Mr. W. Long, 917; Mr. Hanbury, 918; R.P. *April* 9

SUTHERLAND, Sir THOMAS, *Greenock*
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 30, 144

TALBOT DE MALAHIDE, Lord
Voluntary Schools Bill, 2R. *Mar* 30, 46

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Hampstead Union Workhouse *April* 6, 597

TANNER, Dr. C. K. D., *Cork, Mid*
East India Company's Officers' Superannuation Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 589
Irish Mail Service *May* 3, 1418
Patent Office Extension Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 589, 590
Public Offices (Whitehall) Site Bill, *April* 5, 591
Quarter Sessions Jurors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 483
Service Franchise Bill, In Com. *May* 3, 1511
Supply
  £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 893, 895, 899
  £43,177 for Law Officers' Department, Salaries, Etc.; Report *May* 3, 1506
  £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 889

Telephone Service

On Motion That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 458, 462; Sir J. Fergusson, 460, 462; Mr. Edwin Lawrence, 463; Mr. Hanbury, 463 *April* 2
(For Questions see Post Office)

Templetown, Viscount

Land Commission *April* 2, 379

Tenure and Ownership of Land in Towns

Mr. E. J. C. Morton, (*Notice of Motion*) *April* 27, 1125

Thomas, Mr. Alfred, *Glamorgan, E.*

Postmen, Pontypridd *May* 4, 1523

Thomas, Mr. David A., *Merthyr Tydvil*

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1553, 1555
Private Bill Procedure *May* 4, 1518

Thompson's Divorce Bill

l. Royal Assent *April* 8, 721

Thorburn, Mr. W., *Peebles and Selkirk*

Private Bill Procedure, Scotland *April* 6, 638

Thornton, Mr. Percy M., *Clapham*

Niger Campaign, Hausa Troops *April* 5, 511

Tomlinson, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*

Idiots' Institutions (Exemption from Rates) Bill, Intro. *April* 7, 720
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 592

TRADE, BOARD OF

President—Mr. C. T. Ritchie
Secretary—Earl of Dudley

Accident to Platelayers, Great Northern Railway, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1350
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill (see that Title)
Canals and Navigable Rivers (Ireland) Amendment Bill, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 9, 842
Daunt's Rock Lightship, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 2, 388
Dublin Electric Tramways, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 2, 403
Gambling in Options and Futures, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 508. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 12, 941

[*cont.*

TRADE, BOARD OF—cont.

Gas Poisoning, Alleged, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 1, 262
Great
  Eastern Railway, Overcrowding, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1407
  Northern Railway, Accident to Platelayers, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1350
Kingstown Harbour, Boat Accidents, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Mar* 30, 99
Light Dues on Shipping, *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Lewis, Mr. J. O'Kelly; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 1, 292
Lighthouse, Tiumpan Head, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1126
Liverpool Docks Loading Accidents, *Q.* Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 12, 945
London and North Western Railway, Death of a Fireman, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 615
Overcrowding
  Carriages, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1349
  Great Eastern Railway, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1407
  Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 512. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 26, 1070
Railway
  Accident
    Potter's Lane, Wednesbury, *Q.* Mr. Walford Green; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 749
    Romford Station, *Q.* Mr. L. Sinclair; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 8, 734
  Carriages, Overcrowding, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1349
Steamship Darwin, *Q.* Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *May* 3, 1418
Thames Conservancy, Bye-laws, *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 29, 1238
Tiumpan Head, Lighthouse, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 27, 1126
Waterloo and City Railway, *Qs.* Sir H. Vincent, Mr. C. E. Schwann, Mr. J. Lowther; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *April* 30, 1342
Weights and Measures Bill, *Q.* Mr. J. W. Crombie; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 5, 533
Workmen's Trains, *Q.* Captain Norton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 6, 619

Trawlers' Licensing Bill

c. Intro., Mr. Hedderwick; Read 1° *April* 6, 642

TREASURY

First Lord—Mr. A. J. Balfour
Patronage Secretary—Sir W. H. Walrond
Financial Secretary—Mr. R. W. Hanbury
Lords Commissioners—Mr. H.T. Anstruther; Mr. W. H. Fisher; Lord Stanley

Tritton, Mr. C. E., *Lambeth, Norwood*
Law Offices *April* 9, 862
Sunday Closing Bill, Intro. *April* 9, 866

Trusts (Scotland) Bill
c. Read 3° and Passed *April* 1, 353
l. Read 1ª *April* 2, 357
  2R., Lord Balfour *May* 3, 1405
  Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *May* 3, 1406

Tully, Mr. Jasper, *Leitrim, S.*
  Crimean Veteran: Brennan (John) *April* 1, 290
  Eslin River Drainage Scheme *April* 1, 291
  Land Commission, Advances *Mar* 30, 103
  Mullingar
    Petty Sessions *April* 6, 636
    Union *April* 6, 614
  Queen's Reign, Release of Prisoner *April* 5, 533
  Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 388

Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act 1877
  Her Majesty's Answer to Address (*c.*) *April* 12, 921

Ure, Mr. Alexander, *Linlithgow*
  Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1475

Vaccination
  Acts, Qs. Mr. J. W. Logan; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin, Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 1, 283
  Royal Commission, Appendices to Report, Q. General Laurie; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *April* 30, 1341. *Q.* Mr. C. J. Monk; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *May* 6, 1592

Valentia, Viscount, *Oxford City*
  Post Office Servant, Dismissal *April* 2, 397

Venezuela
  Boundaries, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 12, 954
  Diplomatic Relations, Renewal of, Q. Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Curzon *April* 5, 525

Verminous Persons Bill
c. 2R., Mr. W. Hazell, 919; [Mr. Speaker, 919;] Colonel Lockwood, 919 *April* 9
  Read 2° *April* 9, 920
  In Com. *April* 28, 1224

Vincent, Colonel Sir C. E. Howard, *Sheffield, Central*
  Army Quarters, Removal *April* 29, 1228
  British Trade with Canada *April* 27, 1125
  Budget *April* 29, 1307
  Engineer Volunteers, Small Arm Ammunition *April* 5, 505
  Importation of Foreign-manufactured Goods *April* 27, 1166, 1180

[*cont.*

Vincent, Colonel Sir C. E. Howard—*cont.*
  Parcel Traffic, England and America *Mar* 30, 114
  Post Office Servants, Superannuation *Mar* 30, 113
  Queen's Reign, Sunday Thanksgiving Service *April* 30, 1350
  Supply: £16,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings *April* 9, 909
  Waterloo and City Railway *April* 30, 1342, 1343
  Working Men's Dwellings *April* 2, 410
  Working Men's Dwellings Bill *April* 1, 258

Voluntary Schools Bill
l. 2R., Duke of Devonshire, 1, 20, 75; Earl Spencer, 16, 20,35; Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, 24, 44, 45; Duke of Argyll, 32, 35, 38, 57; Lord Herschell, 38. 44, 45, 46, 47, 78; Viscount Cross, 45, 78, 79; Lord Talbot de Malahide, 46; Lord Bishop of Manchester, 46, 47; Marquess of Ripon, 51, 57, 58, 59; Lord Halsbury, 58, 59; Earl Stanhope, 61; Lord Norton, 63; Lord Herries, 65; Lord Bishop of London, 67; Earl of Kimberley, 72, 75, 79; (*Division*, 80) *Mar* 30
  Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *Mar* 30, 81
  In Com., Lord Halsbury, 361, 362, 363, 366, 367, 368, 371, 375; Lord Herschell, 362, 363, 365, 367, 369, 370, 377; Earl of Camperdown, 364, 368; Duke of Argyll, 364, 365, 376, 377; Earl of Kimberley, 365, 366, 368, [*New Clause*] 371, 372, 374, 376, 377; Lord Coleridge, 366; Earl Spencer, 366; Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, 368; Duke of Devonshire, 370, 372, 374; (*Division*, 373;) Lord Norton, 378 *April* 2
  Rep. without Amendt.; Standing Com. negatived *April* 2, 378
  Read 3ª and Passed *April* 5, 498
  Royal Assent *April* 8, 721
  (For Questions see Education Department)

Volunteers Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Powell-Williams; Read 1° *April* 5, 539
  2R., Mr. Powell-Williams, 1120; Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, 1121; Mr. Brodrick, 1121 *April* 26
  Read 2° *April* 26, 1121
  On the Order for going into Committee an Instruction to Com. stood in the name of Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; [Mr. Speaker ruled the Instruction out of Order, and the House proceeded to Committee] *May* 3, 1505
  In Com., R.P. *May* 3, 1505

Votes and Grants for Local Purposes
  On Motion That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Dr. Clark, (*Amendt.*) 414, 422, 425; [Mr. Speaker, 414;] Sir J. Leng, 418, 423; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 420, 422, 424, 425; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 424; (*Amendt. negatived*, 425) *April* 2

WALES

Berriew School Bill (see that Title)
Cardiff Postmen, *Q.* Mr. J. M. Maclean ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *April* 29, 1237
Carew, Pembrokeshire, Parish Meeting, *Q.* Mr. Rees Davies ; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 635
Deportation of Paupers, *Q.* Mr. J. Daly ; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 636
Education in, Mortmain Acts, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Lewis ; *A.* Sir R. Webster *April* 1, 296
London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill (see that Title)
Nitro-glycerine Factory, Anglesey, *Q.* Mr. W. T. Howell ; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 755
Pontypridd Postmen, *Q.* Mr. Alfred Thomas ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *May* 4, 1523
Swansea Workhouse, Roman Catholic Children, *Qs.* Mr. M. J. Flavin ; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *April* 6, 620
Welsh Land Commission Report, *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Roberts ; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *April* 8, 752

WALLACE, Mr. ROBERT, *Perth*
Supply : £52,277 for Prisons, Scotland *April* 30, 1398

WALROND, SIR WILLIAM H., BART. (Patronage Secretary to the Treasury), *Devon, Tiverton*
Budget *April* 28, 1224

WALTON, Mr. J. LAWSON, *Leeds, S.*
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 812

WANKLYN, Mr. JAMES LESLIE, *Bradford, Central*
Incorporated Law Society *April* 8, 732

WARING, Colonel THOMAS, *Down, N.*
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1679, 1684
Boards of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 713
Charge of Burglary, Downpatrick *April* 12, 921
Grocers' Licences *April* 5, 523
Land Commission *April* 8, 743
Waterford Dungarvan and Lismore Railway *April* 6, 629

WARNER, Mr. T. COURTENAY T., *Staffordshire, Lichfield*
Budget *April* 29, 1287
Supply
  £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1374
  £22,300 for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses *April* 30, 1359, 1360
  £22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 871
  £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 875, 887

WAR OFFICE

Secretary of State—Marquess of LANSDOWNE
Under Secretary of State—Mr. BRODRICK
Financial Secretary—Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS
(See ARMY)

WARR, Mr. AUGUSTUS F., *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1482

WAYS AND MEANS

Budget
  Business of the House, *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Vesey Knox ; *As.* Sir W. Walrond *April* 28, 1224
  Resolutions, *Qs.* Mr. A. O'Connor ; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 30, 1352

Financial Statement, 1897-98
The Budget
Paragraphs contained therein
  Coinage, 1261
  Customs—Revenue, 1253
  Death Duties, 1255
  Decreases of Expenditure, 1266
  Estimated Expenditure (1897-98), 1268
  Estimated Revenue (1897-98), 1269
  Excise, 1254
  Expenditure for the Past Year, 1258
  Final Balance Sheet, 1275
  General Stamps, 1258
  Income Tax, 1252
  Increasing National Prosperity, 1250
  National Debt, 1260
  Post Office Reforms, 1271
  Revenue (1896-97), 1251
  Sixty Years' Retrospect, 1263
  South African Garrison, 1270
  Surplus, Naval Expenditure, 1270
Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1250, (*Motion for Duty on Tea*) 1255, 1280, 1293, 1317, 1332, 1333 ; Sir W. Harcourt, 1255, 1277, 1280, 1285, 1286, 1288, 1292, 1301, 1322, 1335 ; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 1284, 1285, 1286, 1287 ; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 1287 ; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 1287, 1288, 1292, 1299 ; Sir C. Dilke, 1292, 1293 ; Mr. J. Lowther, 1294 ; Mr. L. Courtney, 1296, 1299, 1300 ; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1299, 1300, 1302, 1335 ; Mr. H. C. Richards, 1303 ; Sir J. Pease, 1303 ; Colonel Milward, 1305 ; Mr. A. Spicer, 1306 ; Sir H. Vincent, 1307 ; Mr. W. Allan, 1310 ; Mr. B. L. Cohen, 1311 ; Mr. T. Lough, 1312, 1317, 1333 ; Mr. C. J. Monk, 1318 ; Mr. E. Robertson, 1319, 1322 ; [Chairman, 1322 ;] Mr. G. J. Goschen, 1323 ; Sir S. Montagu, 1324 ; Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, 1327 ; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1328 ; (*Motion withdrawn*, 1336) *April* 29
Reso. on Income Tax Agreed to *April* 29, 1336
Report *April* 30, 1402

WEBSTER, Mr. R. G., *St. Pancras, E.*
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 320

WEBSTER, SIR RICHARD E. (Attorney General), *Isle of Wight*
- Berriew School Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 777
- Carbide of Calcium *April* 1, 297; *April* 2, 409
- Crete *April* 9, 861
- Education in Wales, Mortmain Acts *April* 1, 296
- Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 8, 827
- Foreign Office *April* 2, 409
- High Court of Justice, Witness Cases *April* 5, 537
- Insurance of Poor Persons *Mar* 30, 122
- Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 780, 802
- Local Bye-laws *April* 12, 952
- Supply
  - £23,071 for County Courts *April* 30, 1377
  - £5,177 for Land Registry *April* 30, 1370
  - £43,177 for Law Officers' Department, Salaries, etc. *April* 30, 1356
  - £204,451 for Supreme Court of Judicature *April* 30, 1362, 1365
- Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1427

WEDDERBURN, Sir W., Bart., *Banffshire*
- Improved Harbour Accommodation (Coasts of Scotland) *May* 4, 1513
- Parish Council, Marnoch, Banffshire *April* 8, 739

WEIR, Mr. J. G., *Ross and Cromarty*
- Beam and Otter Trawling *May* 3, 1407
- Carloway Road, Lewis *April* 29, 1234
- Channel Fleet *April* 5, 512, 513
- Congested Districts, Scotland *April* 29, 1247
- County Councillors' Travelling Expenses (Scotland) *April* 2, 453
- Crofters' Commission, Report *May* 3, 1419
- Cromarty Firth, Anchorage *April* 9, 843
- Edinburgh University Library *April* 29, 1227
- Experiments on Living Animals *April* 29, 1228
- Fishery Cruiser *Vigilant* *April* 30, 1345
- Glebe of Kintail, Foreshore *April* 8, 728
- Great Eastern Railway *May* 3, 1407
- Herring Brand Fees *May* 3, 1408
- Houses of Parliament, Electric Lighting *April* 6, 603
- Iceland *April* 6, 631
- Illegal Trawling
  - Lewis *April* 26, 1070
  - Moray Firth *April* 26, 1077; *April* 30, 1349
  - Scottish Waters *April* 9, 839; *April* 27, 1126
- Inspector of Poor, Kiltearn, Ross-shire *April* 8, 729

[*cont.*

WEIR, Mr. J. G.—*cont.*
- Lewis
  - Carloway Road *April* 6, 630; *April* 29, 1234
  - Illegal Trawling *April* 26, 1070
  - Piers *April* 9, 855; *April* 27, 1128
  - Port Ness Harbour *April* 9, 840
  - Postal Facilities *April* 29, 1243
- Lighthouse, Tiumpan Head *April* 27, 1126
- Local Government Board for Scotland, Report *April* 29, 1243
- *Mars* Battleship *April* 30, 1344
- Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways, Overcrowding *April* 5, 512; *April* 26, 1070; *April* 29, 1227
- North Sea Fisheries Convention *April* 5, 512; *April* 6, 602
- Parish Councils, Scotland *April* 5, 513
- Piers, Lewis *April* 9, 855; *April* 27, 1128
- Police, Counties, Scotland *April* 8, 729
- Port Ness Harbour, Lewis *April* 9, 840
- Postal Facilities, Lewis *April* 29, 1243
- Post Office
  - Extensions, Scotland *May* 3, 1410
  - Savings Bank *April* 6, 600, 601, 602; *May* 3, 1407
- Railway Carriages, Overcrowding *April* 30, 1349
- School Board Elections, Scotland *April* 5, 513
- Stationery, Admiralty *April* 30, 1344
- Supply
  - £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 893
  - £238,000 for Revenue Department Buildings (Great Britain) *April* 9, 868
  - £22,000 for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House *April* 9, 870, 872, 873
  - £70,000 for Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens *April* 9, 876
- Telegraph Offices *April* 8, 730; *April* 9, 843
- Trawling
  - Beam and Otter *May* 3, 1407
  - Illegal (see Illegal Trawling above)
- Trustee and Post Office Savings Banks *April* 27, 1126
- Water Supply, Causer, Inverness-shire *April* 9, 843

WHARTON, Mr. J. LLOYD, *Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon*
- Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill, 2R. *April* 8, 823

WHITELEY, Mr. G., *Stockport*
- Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill 2R. *April* 7, 682, 683, 687, 691, 702
- Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1458

WHITMORE, Mr. C. A., *Chelsea*
- London Water Supply, Royal Commission *April* 29, 1230

WHITTAKER, Mr. T. P., *Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley*
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 220
- Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 920
- Plumbers' Registration Bill, 2R. *April* 30, 1402

WILLIAMS, Colonel ROBERT, *Dorset, W.*
Mombasa Railway *April* 8, 728

WILLIAMS, Mr. J. CARVELL, *Nottinghamshire, Mansfield*
Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 587
Elementary Education Act (1870) Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 26, 1108
Elementary Education, Increased Grant *April* 5, 575; *April* 8, 832
North Mundham Board Schools, Sussex *April* 1, 260
Parochial Rates, Liverpool *April* 6, 607
School Accommodation, Heywood *April* 12, 949
Supply: £23,000 for Houses of Parliament, Buildings *April* 9, 895
Voluntary School Accommodation *April* 9, 844; *April* 30, 1343
Voluntary Schools *April* 12, 956
Voluntary Schools Act *April* 26, 1073

WILLIAMS, MR. J. POWELL- (Financial Secretary to the War Office), *Birmingham, S.*
Army
  Medical Department *April* 12, 947; *April* 26, 1072
  Quarters, Removal *April* 29, 1229
Chelsea Hospital *April* 5, 507
Crimean Veteran: Brennan (John) *April* 1, 290
Haulbowline Dockyard *April* 8, 731
Militia Training, Queen's County *April* 12, 948
Queen's Reign, Jubilee Procession *April* 12, 945
Volunteers Bill, Intro. *April* 5, 539; 2R. *April* 26, 1120

WILLOX, Mr. J. A., *Liverpool, Everton*
Arrest of Mr. Cranstoun *April* 8, 733
Holidays, Prison Warders *April* 8, 733

WILLS, Sir W. H., Bart., *Bristol, E.*
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1490

WILSON, Mr. H. J., *Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth*
School Boards, Working Balance *April* 9, 854

WILSON, Mr. JOHN, *Durham, Mid*
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1547, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1572, 1574

WILSON, Mr. JOHN, *Falkirk Burghs*
Autumn Manœuvres, Scotland *May* 4, 1522
Earthquake, West Indies *May* 4, 1530
Military Camp, Scotland *April* 2, 402
Recruits, 3rd Battalion Light Infantry and Scottish Rifles *April* 2, 401, 402
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1480

WILSON, Mr. J. HAVELOCK, *Middlesbrough*
Merchant Shipping (Undermanning) Bill, 2R. *May* 3, 1497
Steamship *Darwin*, *May* 3, 1418
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1430, 1481

Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. H. Lewis; Read 1° *April* 6, 642

WINGFIELD-DIGBY, Mr. J. K. *Dorset, N.*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 677, 683, 710

WOLFF, Mr. G. W., *Belfast, W.*
Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill, 2R. *April* 7, 709
Agricultural Rating, Ireland *May* 6, 1684
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Mar* 31, 242
Telegrams, Belfast *April* 12, 936
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1486

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES OF THE CROWN
Kew Gardens, Q. Mr. J. H. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *April* 8, 735
Revenue Returns, Ireland, Q. Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 2, 396
Tithe Rent-charge, Ireland, Q. Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *April* 5, 528

WOODS, Mr. SAMUEL, *Essex (Walthamstow)*
Civil Service Clerks *May* 6, 1590
London Water Supply, Royal Commission *April* 29, 1231
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, 2R. *May* 5, 1553, 1577
Thames Conservancy Bye-laws *April* 29, 1238
Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1430

Working Men's Dwellings Bill
c. Sir H. Vincent *April* 1, 258
Withdrawn *April* 1, 258

Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill

c. Sir Matthew White Ridley, (*Motion for leave to Intro.*) 1421, 1427, 1430, 1432, 1433, 1437 1458, 1480, 1489, 1491; Sir C. Dilke, 1427, 1451; Sir R. Webster, 1427; Mr. H. H. Asquith, 1430, 1433, 1437, 1440; Mr. R. J. Price, 1430; Mr. J. Havelock Wilson, 1430, 1481; Mr. S. Woods, 1430; Mr, J. Samuel, 1432; Sir J. Pease, 1433, 1460; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 1440, 1446, 1447, 1457, 1461, 1471; Sir A. B. Forwood, 1442; Mr. R. B. Haldane, 1444, 1446, 1447; Mr. Stuart-Wortley, 1448; Mr. G. Drage, 1454; Mr. W. Allan, 1456, 1457, 1458, 1471; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1458; Mr. G. Whiteley, 1458; Mr. W. R. Bousfield, 1473; Mr. A. Ure, 1475; Colonel Blundell, 1478; Mr. G. Harwood, 1479, 1480; Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk), 1480; Mr. A. F. Warr, 1482; Mr. T. T. Bucknill, 1484; Mr. S. T. Evans, 1486; Mr. G. W. Wolff, 1486; Mr. J. G. Butcher, 1487; Mr. H. E. Kearley, 1489; Mr. H. C. Richards, 1489; Sir W. H. Wills, 1490; Mr. M. Oldroyd, 1490; Mr. W. S. Robson, 1491 *May* 3

Intro., Sir Matthew White Ridley; Read 1° *May* 3, 1492

Sir Matthew White Ridley *May* 3, 1492

WORKS, FIRST COMMISSIONER

Mr. A. AKERS-DOUGLAS

WORTLEY, Right Hon. C. B. STUART-, *Sheffield, Hallam*

Workmen (Compensation for Accidents) Bill, 1R. *May* 3, 1448

YERBURGH, Mr. R. A., *Chester*

Food Supplies, United Kingdom *April* 6, 652, 657, 672

YOUNG, Mr. S., *Cavan, E.*

Bailieborough Petty Sessions, Cavan *April* 1, 273

Clerkship of Petty Sessions, Ireland *April* 2, 393

Sunday Postal Delivery, Cavan *April* 2, 394

YOXALL, Mr. J. H., *Nottingham, W.*

Army Schoolmasters *May* 6, 1593

Kew Gardens *April* 8, 735

Postmen, Nottingham *May* 6, 1593

Zanzibar and Pemba: Slavery in (see AFRICA)

END OF VOLUME XLVIII., AND FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1897.

WATERLOW AND SONS LIMITED, PRINTERS, LONDON WALL, LONDON.